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Puritanism & Islam

by Joe Escobar - Friday, October 7, 2016, 10:03 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Puritanism & Islam topic.
To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

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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Findings About Puritanism and Muslims



by Garrett Richards - Sunday, October 9, 2016, 2:37 PM

After listening to this audio I had know idea what Puritanism was. After hearing that Muslims had far more in common with seventeen century Puritans I got kinda interested (2:35). Also that Puritanism and a different worldview resonates in many. Another fact that I heard is that Egyptian students are closer to Puritanism than American descendants is something that I would have never thought. I can see why this audio interview could not catch a lot of attention to people listening because of these findings.

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Re: Puritanism & Islam

by Jeremy Goodwin - Sunday, October 9, 2016, 2:59 PM

Yes, i am concerned with this finding, because i feel as if American students should understand and/or relate to English Puritans better than Muslim students in Egypt do. After reading Chapter two from the textbook i can safely say i can relate to the Puritans and their influence in the New World. About a week ago my "eyes would've glazed." A week ago i didn't know that, "In 1629 Puritans obtained a charter and on their own terms sailed to New England with the guidance of John Winthrop, and founded a colony of pure Christianity." (Pg.60).

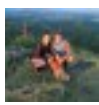
In my opinion after newly being introduced to this new insight, believe that educators in this country need to share the significance of the Puritan group. A well educated American student should know that Puritans sailed to New England and founded the first colony of pure Christianity on American soil, as aforementioned. We should have some sense of awareness about what the *Covenant Theology* system is (Pg.61), so we can understand Puritans motives more clearly. We Americans should know where these people came from which is pretty basic, but more importantly know in depth about the compromise that initially prompted the Puritan reform movement towards a more thoroughly Calvinist Church of England. (Pg.40). We should know John Cotton's importance and what he preached. We should know who Roger Williams, and Anne Hutchinson were, and a little about their background/significance in the foundation of Rhode Island. (Pg.64).

If i remember correctly from the Religion poll shown in class, Christians had the most people representing a religion category in particular. Although the sample did not contain a large enough sample to be representative of all of the American student population, the data from class still persuades me to analyze that American students should understand and/or relate to English Puritans better than Muslim students in Egypt do.

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Re: Puritanism & Islam



by Peter Iten - Friday, October 14, 2016, 7:17 PM

Jeremy, can't say I really agree with your post. In your second paragraph you said, "A well educated American student should know that Puritans sailed to New England and founded the first colony of pure Christianity on American soil". So If someone doesn't know this trivial history fact are they not well educated? Were you not educated before last weeks post? Of course you were. What about doctors or engineers who have focused on math and science, but might not know the puritans came over in 1629, are they not well educated? And if this is the determining factor of a persons level of education then why stop at 1629. Let's make American college students learn the customs and cultures of every single native tribe that was here before then. Then we'll really know who's "well" educated.

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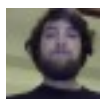
Re: Puritanism & Islam

by Jeremy Goodwin - Friday, October 14, 2016, 8:20 PM

Peter you asked, "So If someone doesn't know this trivial history fact are they not well educated?" My response is, no i wouldn't generalize anyone who doesn't know that "Puritans sailed to New England and founded the first colony of pure Christianity on American soil" (Pg.60) as not educated because, somebody could be very well educated in other fields. I just like to think i am well educated because i know the history now lmao.

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Re: Puritanism & Islam

by Skye Lipson - Saturday, October 15, 2016, 12:33 PM

I disagree with the statement in the book regarding, "pure christianity", it seems like a very vague term, would one be wrong to say that perhaps America is a pair of continents and that pure christianity could refer to devout catholics such as the Spanish settlers or the French settlers who came to America before the Puritans?

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Relating and Understanding are Different

by Skye Lipson - Sunday, October 9, 2016, 4:15 PM

In all honesty, no, I am not concerned, nor surprised, that Cairo students can relate to an all encompassing religious perspective like that of the English puritan-separatists. Further more I do not glaze over when considering the puritan-separatist influence on our country's formation, yet to say I relate to them would be even farther from the truth. I can view them and have interest in their society's contribution to ours in an intellectual perspective but that does not necessarily mean that I agree with the reasons for their actions or their ways of thinking. As the documentary said these Egyptian students live in a culture that is more religiously centralized than our own and therefore they can relate to more religiously centralized cultures from our past better than American students. This perspective does not make them more enlightened in anyway but rather it indicates that their cultures are more similar (which is not necessarily a good thing).

"As a people, New Englanders agreed to obey the law, and god promised to prosper them. If magistrates enforced God's law and the people supported these efforts, God would not punish the whole community for the misdeeds of individuals." (Liberty, Equality, Power Pg 61) I think this quote describes well the religious centralization of puritan-separatist society which seems to be the case as well in islam just with a slightly different way of going about the exact details. So as I see it the Egyptian students are better able to relate to the puritan separatists-because they live in similar societies. Which does not by any means indicate that these Egyptian students are somehow more enlightened in their view of the culture.

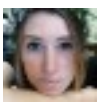
As far as the essential knowledge Americans should take away from the puritan-separatists, I think that perhaps the most important aspects are that they were protestants that were disgusted with the false transformation of the catholic church of England in to a supposedly protestant anglican church of England which remained catholic by all means except that divorce was allowed by the newly self proclaimed pope king Henry the Eighth. I think it is also important to recognize that they were strongly Calvinist and believed that heaven was reserved for a small group of God's chosen souls and that everyone was already predetermined to go to heaven or hell. This system of belief is what formed the puritan church as it was, which only allowed a highly select group to become church members in an attempt to create that elite group of "God's chosen".

The results in the religion poll do not directly influence what I am choosing to write, but they most definitely are a product of of our religious diversity within the population as a whole which is in fact partly influenced by the puritan-separatists and their settlement of the Atlantic North-East.

My own religious affiliation or absence of most definitely affects my view of the puritan-separatists because my own religious/non-religious bias conflicts with theirs.

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by Jaclyn Bahn - Monday, October 10, 2016, 1:24 AM

I am concerned with the findings of this report. I am concerned with the fact that American students are not aware or as educated on a subject that really applies to their country. Not only their country but their constitutional right of church being separate from state and being able to choose what and how you practice.

Personally my eye have always been "glazed over". I am an example of the U.S educational system (specifically high school) failing its students education on their own countries history. Being my first higher education history class, the information from this report is very new to me. As of now I do see and understand the Puritans and their influence in the New World.

The Similarities that I see between the two groups of students is that both groups are analysing Puritanism in their own current cultures. The differences I see is that the middle eastern students are in a culture where polygamy is more common or socially acceptable (Turkey was the only country that was brought up in the interview where polygamy is not accepted). While Americans live in a culture or society that views love or marriage in a very traditionally Christian sense.

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Re: Addressing Questions 1-3

by Skye Lipson - Wednesday, October 12, 2016, 4:02 PM

It confuses me how you can say that "Americans live in a culture or society that views love or marriage in a very traditionally Christian sense." when "a very traditionally Christian sense" depending on what traditions you are speaking of could be referring to the puritan separatists and/or other groups of christians that have originally been polygamist.

As far as your first paragraph, after having listened to the resource for this forum, I would not say that the speaker in it was pointing out that Americans are somehow uneducated on this subject, but rather that our present culture does not relate to the puritans the way that the students from Egypt were able to, given the example of the staged debate over the constitutionality of polygamy which the Egyptian students deemed constitutional and the real supreme court deemed unconstitutional.

You say in your second paragraph that "the U.S educational system (specifically high school) [is] failing its students", and perhaps I agree with you in some aspects of that statement. I don't like standardized tests that give schools ratings but then

do not give the low rated schools more support, but I do not have much objection to standardized tests themselves (while I do value some level of freedom for teachers to present material that interests them the students should all have the opportunity to learn some of the same key points). In general I just believe that schools would benefit from more economic support, and training for teachers who are deemed bad rather than firing them after they went all the way to a masters degree for their career. But besides some institutional flaws in the way we handle our educational system, it is not that bad; it does in fact teach many important aspects of the constitution and our history, just not at a college level obviously. Perhaps the reason that high school "fails its students", as you put it, is because all of those students eyes are glazed over. It can be rather difficult to teach students who do not care to learn.

Back to your third paragraph, I agree that some of the reason the Egyptian students would be able to relate to the puritans better than we can is because "polygamy [may be] more common or socially acceptable" in their culture, but I think that more of the reason is simply that religion plays a more central role in both cultures.

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Addressing Questions 4-6

by Jaclyn Bahn - Monday, October 10, 2016, 1:28 AM

The essential elements of Puritanism that students should know are their influences in the New World, how the values have been continued, adapted, or lost, and why knowing these things matters.

The Religion Pool on Moodle influenced my analysis due to the fact that not many students participated or chose to not answer the question. My opinion is that it shows students not wanting to share or discuss their religious view. Religion has been a sensitive subject for as long as I can remember. In my personal experience it has been something I have been shamed by others for and people may share that experience. Not only that but we have been discouraged for our own beliefs, causing us to not feel comfortable speaking about it freely. I see that influencing this poll, maybe not a lot but slightly.

I see myself as being implicitly bias due to the fact that I believe that church and state should be separate and by accepting someone's constitutional right to choose what and how to practice their religion means that I am also allowed to choose what and how to practice my religion.

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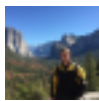
Re: Puritanism & Islam, My Outlook

by Morganne Roy - Monday, October 10, 2016, 8:08 PM

I don't consider this revelation concerning but rather one that would align with my preconceptions. I feel as though I understand fairly well what the Puritan's devotion to their faith was like, which I would agree has more in common practically- though not theologically- with Middle-Eastern Muslims than it does with the casual, non-reverent way many modern American Christians approach the subject of divinity. I am a Christian (non-denominational, with leans towards the Reformed tradition) and while I completely agree with the crucial notion of separation of church and state, I also think that if you believe you've found the whole truth- as Christianity claims to be- then that truth should be pervasive throughout the entirety your life and not restricted to twice a year, or even an hour a week. In that sense I suppose I can find common ground the Puritans and the Muslim students as well, even though there are some obvious and also some obscure facets between our beliefs and functions that would be cause for distinction; such as the aforementioned separation between church and state that both groups had/have little to no use for.

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Re: Puritanism & Islam, My Outlook

by Mitchell Olive - Wednesday, October 12, 2016, 10:50 PM

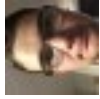
I thought your post was well written, insightful, and articulate. At the end of your post, you are talking about the Islam and colonial Christianity, when you state that "separation between church and state that both groups had/have little to no use for." I think that this part of your post clearly illustrates the difference between your spirituality and theirs because they do think that there is a use for it. At 3 minutes and 45 seconds of the audio, it says "The way that Puritanism offers a totalizing and undifferentiated worldview." Literally this was what shaped their lives and they wanted it to. It is what decided who their ruler is, where they live, who they associated themselves with, and in a lot of cases who was alive or dead in their areas and whether or not they would be in contact with Indians or let them live in some cases. In Islam nations, their religion shapes everything and they don't know any other way. For all we know, most of them see it as a very fulfilling, complete life and they wouldn't want to have a separation of church and state because then they wouldn't have their community daily prayers every few hours.

They might feel that there would be no use for life without it. I'm not saying your faith is not as strong, I just think that their exclusion and entitledness stemming from the all encompassing aspect of faith in the colonial times is something that is not as relatable to Christians today. Even if there are Christians today who think that they are the only ones going to heaven, they would not go out of their way to kill someone or kick them out of their community for not believing. On page 80 of our textbook, it is stated that "The Spanish responded by whipping 47 medicine men for sorcery and by hanging three of them in 1675. A fourth committed

suicide. Pope, a San Juan Pueblo medicine man, was one of those whipped for his beliefs." I don't think they saw the irony that a lot of them were escaping religious persecution in their mother country and then forcing it onto people and creating societies based on their religion. I do see how it is important to them and why they would pay taxes because for a lot of them, it was the reason they left the motherland.

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Re: Puritanism & Islam. Why was society so different in Virginia compared to England

by Jabon Hagel - Monday, October 10, 2016, 10:01 PM

Society was different due to the fact that everyone's days were lived differently. In England there were people who were weathermen and in Virginia all they could do was to guess. Technology also had a huge role to play in the difference in Jamestown and England. Where the English had what they needed when they needed it but the people in Virginia had to request something and then wait months for a ship to arrive carrying the good. This is just a few reasons why England and Virginia were such different places.

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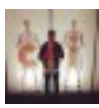
Puritans then and Now

by Vanessa Chenoweth - Monday, October 10, 2016, 10:26 PM

I am concerned with this finding about how the students' eyes would glaze over when hearing the word Puritanism. I can personally say that I understand a little bit with what the Puritans went through in the New World as well as the influence that they had. What sets these two groups apart and Professor Scott says it quite plainly in the video is that most of the Middle Eastern, Muslim students had more in common with 17th century New England Puritans than most 21st century American students. I believe what is similar about the two groups is that it made the students have a world-wide view about this group of people. Some of the elements of Puritanism that a well-educated American student should know is that Puritans were blocked from altering the established church from within and were restricted in England by laws controlling the practice of religion. One last element they should know is that Puritans took on a Reformed theology and, in a sense, were Calvinists. Regarding the Religion Poll it seemed like most of the students in the class who answered the poll chose Catholics or one of the other Religion choices or decided not to answer. I don't feel like my choice biased my study of this group of people.

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Re: Puritans then and Now

by Jeremy Goodwin - Friday, October 14, 2016, 9:33 PM

I see you find the findings concerning too. I would like to add to the list of your elements of Puritanism that a well educated American student should know. "In the mind of some Puritans, extending God's grace to the natives was needed to build the perfect christian community" (Pg.66) This belief led to the Puritans coveting the Indians' lands and souls. According to page 65, the five Puritan colonies were Massachusetts, Plymouth, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Haven. Presented to us in class was John Winthrop, leader of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. American students should know about him because he played a significant role in navigating the Puritans to New England. John was a Cambridge educator lawyer, and land holder, according to the 6 minute Puritan video.

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Re: Puritans then and Now

by Vanessa Chenoweth - Saturday, October 15, 2016, 5:41 PM

Thank you Jeremy Goodwin, I had forgotten that John Winthrop had played a significant role in navigating the Puritans to New England. Also thank you for the other elements of Puritanism. I agree with you on the piece from page 66 in the book that in the mind of some of the Puritans about extending God's grace to the natives was needed to build a perfect christen community.

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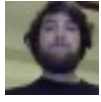
Why im not concerned

by Peter Iten - Monday, October 10, 2016, 11:42 PM

I personally don't find Professor Patrick Q Mason's findings concerning. Wouldn't it be more concerning if American students could relate to a civilization from hundreds of years ago? A couple of hundreds ago slavery was legal and innocent people were being murdered for being "witches". Also, the example used in the audio recording was based on Islamic and Mormon views of polygamy. A religious practice that oppresses women. Once again, I'm not to concerned... Puritans and Muslims share a similar devotion to their religion and it plays a large role of their everyday life. The work ethic of the puritan society is important for students to take away. However, I think it's important for students to realize this society wasn't perfect, and while I hope no students "eyes glaze over" during any period of their studies. I wouldn't dwell on relating or not relating to past civilizations, but rather focus on bettering future civilizations.

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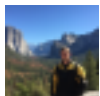
Relating Is Not By Today's standards Particularly Good

by Skye Lipson - Wednesday, October 12, 2016, 4:34 PM

I agree in the sense that if we could relate to the puritans in full that by today's standards that would be pretty messed up. Although we share some similarities with the puritan colony as Mr. Escobar suggested in class our culture chooses to punish those who commit crimes, and we do this as a function of our whole society just as the puritans did, one key difference between us being the extent to which the courts can punish and which crimes are punishable offenses (which we certainly do not agree with the puritans on), we do not relate to them by having dis-jointed similarities that may have developed from their influence. To relate I believe differs from understanding in that it adds empathy to the mix. You can understand what a murderer's motives were, but if you begin to relate to or empathize with that murderer then there might be some cause to worry. Whereas to relate to the puritans suggests some form of subtle agreement with their ways and practices (which I admit there is some of in our culture today, but we are far from where they were religiously). As Peter says above "Puritans and Muslims share a similar devotion to their religion and it plays a large role of their everyday life." so it seems logical that having inherent cultural similarities and agreements is why in the resource the Egyptian students were better able to relate to or empathize with the puritans culture.

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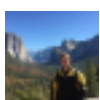
Re: Puritanism & Islam

by Mitchell Olive - Monday, October 10, 2016, 11:54 PM

I think that it is understandable to see how students in the Middle east can relate more to this.

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Re: Puritanism & Islam

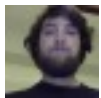
by Mitchell Olive - Tuesday, October 11, 2016, 12:13 AM

I think that it is understandable to believe that students in the Middle East could better understand how religion played such a prominent role in the colonies, more so than Christians or Puritans today. At 3 minutes and 50 seconds of the audio tape, the professor states that "the sacred presses upon every aspect of life", something that people in the Middle East and Christians of the time we are studying can relate to. I think that it is not the substance of the religion that matters here as far as what

is easiest to relate to and understand, because no Christian or Puritan today can relate to killing people for being witches or a lot of other things that went on in this time anyway. To me, it is more about what the government can get away with and put onto religion. It is about the beliefs of a specific religion impacting and dictating how the government handles things, simply the connectedness of church and state. I went to high school with someone from Iran and he told me that people would get publicly whipped for holding the hand of their grandmother while crossing the street because they were not allowed to touch women in public. On the bottom of page 80 in our textbook, it states that, when some Pueblos abandoned Christianity to go back to their old forms of worship after attacks from some other tribes, "The Spaniards responded by whipping 47 medicine men for sorcery and by hanging three of them in 1675". This is not something that any Christians today, in my opinion, would be able to grasp. Do the results of the religion poll influence my analysis? Yes. Does my religion bias my study of these people? Yes. Everyone has their biases. No, I cannot relate to a lot of what was done in the name of Christianity, and the role it played, even though I was raised Catholic and went to Catholic school for 8 years.

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Re: Puritanism & Islam

by Skye Lipson - Wednesday, October 12, 2016, 4:12 PM

I like what you have to say on this topic!

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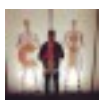
Re: Puritanism & Islam

by Cameron McCord - Wednesday, October 12, 2016, 10:26 PM

Honestly I have very much over looked this topic, because i have not really learned in depth the backgrounds of Puritanism, and Islam. So for me to answer "if I'm concerned about this finding" Yes i am concerned i feel as Americans we should know more about this considering it was very prominent in the early years of finding America.

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Re: Puritanism & Islam

by Jeremy Goodwin - Saturday, October 15, 2016, 8:56 AM

About two weeks ago I too very much over looked this topic as well, and I too am concerned with the findings. Puritanism has a huge impact on the New World, i think it should be almost common knowledge to know at least a thing or two

about the Puritans. Common knowledge for example would be knowing the year the Declaration of Independence was signed. A well educated American student definitely should know what year the Declaration of Independence was signed, if not, that's much more concerning and a topic for a different discussion. However i would say it is too hasty to say that if any American student does not know a thing or two about Puritans, then they are not well educated. That's wrong because they could be very well educated in another field, yet its still a little concerning to the rest of us who agree that this new insight is concerning.

I see you didn't include any elements that you believe a well educated American student should know about the Puritans, so i would like to mention a few for you. "Puritans demanded for reforming the Church of England. Some Puritans came to realize that church reform would have better prospects across the Atlantic." (Pg.60). This realization just mentioned caused the group to sail to the New World led by Cambridge educated lawyer/landholder, John Winthrop. "New England would be the place where the Puritans founded a colony of pure Christianity, far from state control." (Pg.60). If there is anything a well educated American student should know would be those essential elements aforementioned. There is a lot to know about the Puritans but those are the key ingredients to note before you decide to explore more about the group.

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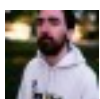
Puritanism & Islam

by Judith Pohl - Thursday, October 13, 2016, 9:20 AM

I wouldn't really say this is concerning to me, not surprising at all. Just goes to show how different everyone's cultures and religions are. I actually liked Mason's idea of not giving the students the full story and having them act out what they would do had they been on supreme court. While I don't by any means think that the outcome of this case should've been any different, I know and respect that everyone has their opinions. Just like the other forum for week 3 ...two very different cultures you will have very different sides and opinions to the stories.

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Changing Perspectives

by Dylan Mandoli - Friday, October 14, 2016, 10:30 PM

I do not find Scott Casper's findings to be particularly surprising, but I do think they are interesting and worthwhile for a student to keep in mind. Social progress by its very nature distances us from the past, creating a disconnect which can be hard to overcome. When you share very little in common with a person's beliefs, it can be very difficult to empathize with them and understand their actions. As America has progressed through and overcame social issues, we have become increasingly distant from the colonists who nursed the nation through its infancy.

To modern eyes, many practices common in the 17th and 18th century are abhorrent. Slavery, dynamically different gender roles, highly divided and rigid class structures, all of these things make the colonists seem less and less like people. We forget that we have three hundred years of social evolution between us. Religious motivations, especially, are difficult to understand if you do not share them. To an atheist or agnostic, or even someone of a different religion or sect, the motivations of a religiously minded person can be difficult to understand.

As History students, and simply as people, I think it is important to view the actions of others in the context of their own worldview. You cannot expect someone to not do something you believe is wrong if their society has not yet come to the same ethical conclusion as you. Slavery, for example, was often viewed as necessary, natural, and sometimes even justified by people at the time. While we now know better, it would be intellectually dishonest to expect the people of the 17th century to act outside their own view of the world. They did their best with the wisdom they had, the same as we do today. I am confident people three hundred years from now will have the same difficulty comprehending our own cultural norms.

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