

Secularism and Literature in the Long Eighteenth Century

ENL 3350 | Spring 2018

Meeting times: T 4, R 4-5 | Classroom: MAT 0115

Instructor: Roger Maioli

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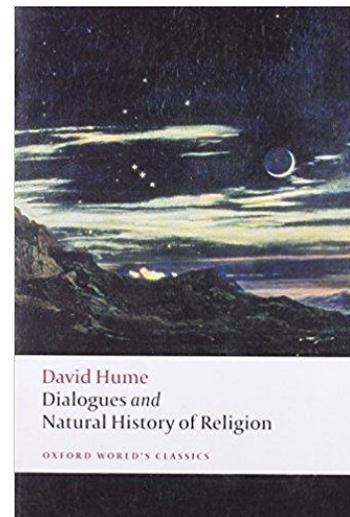
Office: Turlington Hall, 4338

Office hours: Tuesday, 2-4 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Secularism — the project of living without religion — is a key element in the history of modernity. Western nations often pride themselves on being secular, confident that faith is not needed for building an ethical society. And yet the notion that we can live good lives without religion remains contested today, and was even more so before the rise of secularism. In eighteenth-century Britain and France, challenges to religion were invariably regarded as challenges to morality as well; and the person without faith often featured in the literature of those times as a moral monster. This course will consider the conflict between secularism and the moral life as illustrated in British and French literature from the late 1600s to the early 1800s

— the period known as the Long Eighteenth Century. We will read early defenses of the secular life by freethinkers such as Anthony Collins and David Hume, together with imaginative responses to irreligion by novelists such as Henry Fielding and Ann Radcliffe and poets such as William Wordsworth and Percy Shelley. We will consider how philosophers and imaginative writers alike envisioned the consequences of secularization for the meaning of life, the peace of society, and the enchantment of the world. In tracing these developments, we will discuss both the challenges that secularism faced during its early stages and the difficulties it still raises for our conception of the ethical life today.



READINGS

We will be working with six required texts. You are welcome to use an electronic version should you prefer to do so. In case you decide to buy a hard copy, **please buy the edition listed below**. They are listed in the order in which we'll be reading them.

1) Molière, *Don Juan and Other Plays*, trans. George Graveley and Ian Maclean (Oxford World's Classics, 2008). ISBN: 978-0199540228

2) Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*, ed. Thomas Keymer (Oxford World's Classics, 2008). ISBN: 0199536988

3) David Hume, *Dialogues and Natural History of Religion*, ed. J.C.A. Gaskin (Oxford World's Classics, 2009). ISBN: 978-0199538324

4) Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography and Other Writings*, ed. Ormond Seavey, Oxford World's Classics, 2009). ISBN: 978-0199554904.

5) Ann Radcliffe, *The Italian*, ed. Nick Groom (Oxford World's Classics, 2017). ISBN: 978-0198704430.

6) William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads: 1798 and 1802*, ed. Fiona Stafford (Oxford World's Classics, 2013). ISBN: 978-0199601967.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for this course fall under five heads: (a) attendance and participation, (b) quizzes, (c) weekly responses, (d) a midterm examination, and (e) a final essay. These five requirements will be weighed as follows:

Attendance and participation:	20%
Quizzes:	20%
Weekly responses:	20%
Midterm Exam:	20%
Final essay:	20%

Final grades, in turn, will be based on the following scale:

	A	93–100	A-	90–92.9	
B+	87–89.9	B	83–86.9	B-	80–82.9
C+	77–79.9	C	73–76.9	C-	70–72.9
D+	67–69.9	D	63–66.9	D-	60–62.9
E	0–59.9				

Here are further details about each requirement:

a) Attendance and participation. You begin the semester with 88 points. You then get extra points for participating in class discussion and you lose points for any of the following reasons: disruptive behavior in class, undue use of the internet during class, or unexcused absences. With regard to the last item, you are entitled to two unexcused absences during the semester. (Absences on the first week of class count towards that total!) Each additional unexcused absence will reduce your A&P score by a third of a letter — for instance, from 88 (B+) to 85 (B). **Important: Six or more unexcused absences will result in failure. Let me say this again: if you miss six classes without a justification, you will fail the course.**

b) Quizzes. There will be a total of seven quizzes, one on each of our main sources (or, occasionally, on a group of sources). Check the course schedule for specific dates. When calculating your final grade for the quizzes, I'll drop your lowest two scores. In other words, only your top 5 scores will count towards your final grade.

c) Weekly responses. Over the course of the semester you will write a series of short responses to the readings (150-200 words). These responses will be posted to Canvas starting the third week of class. I will be explaining them in class, but each response should do one of three things: offer a personal reading of a passage or text, identify a feature of the source that seems to call for an explanation, or pose a question for class discussion. Responses will not be graded for content, but regular submission counts for 20% of your grade. You are allowed to miss two of them without affecting your grade.

d) Midterm exam. This will be a take-home examination in which you will be asked to interpret and discuss passages from any texts studied so far. I will be saying more about it the week before.

e) Final essay. This will be a 4-5 page essay in which you will respond to one of several prompts I will provide you with. You will receive detailed instructions on this essay on Week 13. **The essay will be due on April 25 at 11:59 PM.** Late essays will lose a third of a letter grade per day that they are late.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	TUESDAY (responses Group 1)	THURSDAY (responses Group 2)
1. Jan 9, 11	Introduction	<i>The Portable Enlightenment Reader</i> : read Newton, Rousseau, d’Holbach, and Gibbon (on Canvas)
2. Jan 16, 18	Molière, <i>Don Juan</i> , 31-59 (Acts I-II)	Molière, <i>Don Juan</i> , 59-91 (Acts III-V) Collins and Tindal on Deism (on Canvas)
3. Jan 23, 25	Quiz 1, on Molière, Collins, and Tindal Fielding, <i>Joseph Andrews</i> , 1-75 (Preface and Book I)	Fielding, <i>Joseph Andrews</i> , 76-161 (Book II)
4. Jan 30, Feb 1	Fielding, <i>Joseph Andrews</i> , 162-240 (Book III)	Fielding, <i>Joseph Andrews</i> , 241-303 (Book IV)
5. Feb 6, 8	Quiz 2, on Fielding David Hume, <i>Dialogues concerning Natural Religion</i> , 29-53	David Hume, <i>Dialogues concerning Natural Religion</i> , 54-89 (Parts III to VIII)
6. Feb 13, 15	David Hume, <i>Dialogues concerning Natural Religion</i> , 90-115 (Parts IX to XI)	David Hume, <i>Dialogues concerning Natural Religion</i> , 25-28, 116-133 (“A Letter,” Part XII, and “Abstract”) Boswell, “Interview with David Hume” (on Canvas)
7. Feb 20, 22	Quiz 3, on Hume Voltaire, <i>The History of Jenni</i> , 99-134 (on Canvas)	Voltaire, <i>The History of Jenni</i> , 134-182 (on Canvas) Take-home exam
8. Feb 27, Mar 1	Hand in exam in class Franklin, <i>Autobiography</i> , 1-60	Franklin, <i>Autobiography</i> , 60-125
9. Mar 13, 15	Franklin, <i>Autobiography</i> , 125-80	Quiz 4, on Voltaire and Franklin Radcliffe, <i>The Italian</i> , 1-53 (Beginning and Vol. I, Chapters 1-4)
10. Mar 20, 22	Radcliffe, <i>The Italian</i> , 53-158	Radcliffe, <i>The Italian</i> , 158-245

	(Vol. I, Chapters 4-11, and Vol. II, Chapters 1-2)	(Volume II, Chapters 3-10)
11. Mar 27, 29	Radcliffe, <i>The Italian</i> , 247-317 (Volume III, Chapters 1-6)	Radcliffe, <i>The Italian</i> , 317-93 (Volume III, Chapters 7-13)
12. Apr 3, 5	Quiz 5, on Radcliffe La Mettrie, <i>Machine Man</i> , 3-25	Essay guidelines: don't miss! La Mettrie, <i>Machine Man</i> and <i>Man as Plant</i> , 26-39, 75-88
13. Apr 10, 12	Quiz 6, on La Mettrie Wordsworth and Coleridge, <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> , 3-4, 39-42, 59-62, 93-115 (The "Advertisement," two short poems — "Goody Blake and Harry Gill" and "The Last of the Flock" — and Wordsworth's "Preface.")	Wordsworth and Coleridge, selected poems from <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> : BY COLERIDGE: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," 5-24 BY WORDSWORTH: "Expostulation and Reply," 80-1 "The Tables Turned," 81-2 "Tintern Abbey," 87-91 "A Poet's Epitaph," 270-71
14. Apr 17, 19	Peacock, "Four Ages of Poetry" (on Canvas)	Shelley, "The Defense of Poetry" (on Canvas)
15. Apr 24	Quiz 7, on Wordsworth, Peacock, and Shelley Conclusion	Final paper due on April 25, at 11:59 PM.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICY

Cellphones and computers: Cellphones are strictly prohibited and should be kept turned off and out of sight during class. Computers are allowed with the wi-fi feature off. You may not access the internet in class, but you may use your computer for taking notes during lecture or for consulting electronic versions of the texts under discussion. Download all internet texts prior to use in class, so you can access them offline. All other uses are prohibited.

Punctuality: I will take attendance at the beginning of class. If you are not in class at that point, you will be counted as absent.

Plagiarism: All written assignments should be your own work. Plagiarizing the work of others (by copying printed or online sources without acknowledgement) is illegal, and you may fail the course if you plagiarize. If you have questions about how to document your sources, or if you want to make sure you are not committing plagiarism without realizing it, please ask me.

Special accommodations: Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the Office of Student Service in order to determine appropriate accommodation. I will be pleased to provide accommodation, but students are responsible for notifying me at the beginning of the semester.

Counseling and Mental Health Resources: Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center.

Sexual Assault and Harassment: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are civil rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/addressing_sexual_misconduct/reporting_sexual_misconduct/