Sociology of Religion Modules for non-Sociology of Religion Classes

**Science and Religion**

Designed for four (4) 90-minute class periods.

Module to be utilized in a sociology of science class, sociology of knowledge class.

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**Module Objectives**

By the end of the module, students will be able to:

1. Think critically about commonly held myths about religion and science.
2. Understand the relationship between science and religion as a relationship between groups of social actors.
3. Frame information about the variation in religious perspectives among scientists.
4. Assess the impact of religious exclusion in science for racial and gender inclusion.
5. Analyze the distinct cultural impact of science and religion in specific national contexts.

*Readings for instructor*:

[1] Ecklund, Elaine Howard, and Christopher Scheitle. 2017. *Religion Vs. Science: What Religious People Really Think*. New York: Oxford University Press.

[2] Ecklund, Elaine Howard, David R. Johnson, Brandon Vaidyanathan, Steven Lewis, Kirstin Matthews, Robert A. Thomson Jr., and Di Di. 2019. *Secularity and Science: What Scientists around the World Really Think about Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press.

[3] Evans, John H., and Michael S. Evans. 2008. “Religion and Science: Beyond the Epistemological Conflict Narrative.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 34:87-105.

**Day 1: Why study religion and science?**

*Readings for students*:

[1] Evans, John H., and Michael S. Evans. 2008. “Religion and Science: Beyond the Epistemological Conflict Narrative.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 34:87-105.

[2] Gould, Stephen Jay. 1997. “Nonoverlapping Magisteria.” *Natural History* 106: 16-22.

[3] Scheitle, Christopher P., David R. Johnson, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2018. “Scientists and Religious Leaders Compete for Cultural Authority of Science.” *Public Understanding of Science* 27(1): 59-75.

*Goals for the day*:

* Identify the stakes in the religion-science relationship
* Remember three modes of framing the religion-science interface

*Suggestions for Class Time*:

**Class exercise**: Break into groups and read “In Texas, a Line in the Curriculum Revives Evolution Debate” by James C. McKinley Jr. (*New York Times*, Jan. 21, 2009: <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/22/education/22texas.html>). First in small groups, then with the class, discuss the following questions. What is the relationship between science and religion in United States? How does this relationship impact both science and religion in the United States?

**Lecture/Discussion:**

1. Why study religion and science?
   1. Science and religion often come into contact in the public sphere. Examples:
      1. Texas textbook controversy: <https://www.statesman.com/NEWS/20170202/Texas-education-board-approves-curriculum-that-challenges-evolution>; <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/29/education/creationists-on-texas-panel-for-biology-textbooks.html>
      2. Religion and climate change: <http://fore.yale.edu/climate-change/statements-from-world-religions/>; <https://www.npr.org/2014/06/08/319831143/climate-scientist-climate-change-is-a-christian-issue-too>
      3. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0096340215599789>
      4. Arrests in Turkey: <https://www.the-scientist.com/news-opinion/opinion-turkeys-scientists-under-pressure-32856>
2. Framing the relationship between religion and science
   1. Independence narrative:
      1. “Science” and “religion” are both knowledge paradigms (See Gould 1997), or ways of knowing about the world. The question, then, is to what degree these different paradigms overlap.
         1. One of the dominant ways of thinking about the relationship between science and religion is Stephen Jay Gould’s idea of Non-Overlapping Magisterium (NOMA). Gould was a well-known Harvard Biologist who postulated that there should not be any conflict between science and religion because they are separate spheres of knowledge that do not overlap.
         2. Gould believed that science dealt with the “empirical universe” while religion dealt with morality and meaning. Gould, who was a well-known proponent of evolution, believed that neither side should feel threatened by the other because, in effect, they speak to different issues.
         3. Despite its popularity, both religious and non-religious scientists have critiqued Gould’s conceptualization.
            1. Francis Collins: “Gould sets up an artificial wall between the two worldviews that doesn't exist in my life. Because I do believe in God's creative power in having brought it all into being in the first place, I find that studying the natural world is an opportunity to observe the majesty, the elegance, the intricacy of God's creation.”[[1]](#footnote-1)
            2. Richard Dawkins: “I think that Gould's separate compartments was a purely political ploy to win middle-of-the-road religious people to the science camp. But it's a very empty idea. There are plenty of places where religion does not keep off the scientific turf. Any belief in miracles is flat contradictory not just to the facts of science but to the spirit of science.”[[2]](#footnote-2)
   2. Conflict narrative
      1. Side with religion or side with science?
         1. Short clip of Bill Nye vs. Ken Ham debate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HA3E8wpBO_I>
            1. Discuss: How do their epistemological approaches differ? What are the implied limits of science/religion from each perspective?
         2. What are the stakes?
            1. Bill Nye: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXLdcqIj-SA>
            2. Article from Answers in Genesis: <https://answersingenesis.org/theory-of-evolution/millions-of-years/are-souls-at-stake/>
            3. For discussion: How are both sides framed in moral terms?
      2. These issues often play out in the political sphere.
         1. Climate change policy has been politicized, with the Religious Right tending to align against progressive reform of environmental policy, favoring free market forces over government regulation.
         2. Since the 1970s, political attitudes of science have shifted remarkably. Conservatives once had the most trust in science, they now have the least (Gauchat 2012)
         3. Scheitle, Johnson, and Ecklund (2018) frame the relationship in terms of cultural authority, demonstrating that some religious individuals turn to religious authorities for answers about the moral implications of science.
      3. Evans and Evans (2008) discuss the supposed reason for the conflict: epistemology—or competing ways of knowing.
         1. Religious people and scientists have different bases for knowing, and thus they are bound to be in conflict (i.e., faith vs. empiricism).
         2. However, Evans and Evans dispute that this so-called conflict is all about epistemology. They argue that assuming the conflict is about epistemology has limited the conversation around science and religion.
      4. Has social science assumed a conflict narrative?
         1. The earliest thinkers in sociology—including Durkheim, Marx, Weber—all found religion to be an important social sphere for examination.
         2. The also all predicted its demise in society (i.e., secularization) because of various mechanisms arising from modernity (i.e., differentiation, rationalization, pluralism, privatization; see Tschannen 1991 for a helpful overview).
         3. Even the rise of science itself has been identified as a pathway toward secularization. In short, it has been argued that science provides new and satisfying explanations for reality, displacing previously held religious explanations.
         4. The US was once thought to be an important counterexample of secularization theory, exhibiting high levels of both religiosity and scientific infrastructure and achievement.
            1. Recent evidence suggests otherwise, as levels of religiosity have been declining in the US, though some point to the remarkable persistence of “intense religion” (strong affiliation, frequent practice, literalism, evangelicalism) (cf. Schnabel and Bock 2017; Voas and Chaves 2016)
   3. Collaborative narrative
      1. Francis Collins is an exemplar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pINptKQYviQ>
         1. Discussion: Is Dr. Collins simply articulating another version of NOMA, or does his personal reflection on the impact of science on his faith suggest a different paradigm?
         2. What limits of science and religion does he articulate?
      2. Ecklund (2010) refers to religious scientists as “boundary pioneers” who can bridge both religious and scientific communities
         1. strategically located to engage with religious individuals
         2. They can bring scientific knowledge to religious individuals in ways that are not so alienating
      3. Discuss: what is the common ground between religion and science? What do you think religious scientists need to say to their fellow religious believers? What do you think they need to say to their colleague in science?

Suggestions for those interested in further reading

[1] Gauchat, Gordon. 2012. “Politicization of Science in the Public Sphere: A Study of Public Trust in the United States, 1974 to 2010.” *American Sociological Review* 77(2): 167-187.

[2] Schnabel, Landon and Sean Bock. 2017. “The Persistence and Exceptionality of American Religion: A Response to Recent Research.” *Sociological Science* 4: 686-700.

[3] Tschannen, Oliver. 1991. “The Secularization Paradigm: A Systematization.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30(4): 395-415.

[4] Voas, David and Mark Chaves. 2016. “Is the United States a Counterexample to the Secularization Thesis?” *American Journal of Sociology* 121(5): 1517-1556.

**Day 2: Do religious people dislike science?**

*Readings for students*:

[1] Ecklund, Elaine Howard, and Christopher Scheitle. 2017. “Chapter 2. Religious People Do Not Like Science” in *Religion Vs. Science: What Religious People Really Think*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 12-33.

[2] Hill, Jonathan P. 2014. “Rejecting Evolution: The Role of Religion, Education, and Social Networks.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 53(3): 575-594.

[3] Scheitle, Christopher P. 2011. "U.S. College Students' Perception of Religion and Science: Conflict, Collaboration or Independence? A Research Note" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*.50: 175-186.

*Goals for the day*:

* Deconstruct popular myths about religious attitudes toward science
* Appreciate concerns of the religious toward certain applications of science

*Suggestions for Class Time*:

**Opening questions (think/pair/share):** What do religious people think about science? What do they think about scientists?

**Lecture/Discussion:**

1. Myths vs reality (Ecklund & Scheitle 2017)
   1. Myth 1: Religious People Do Not Like Science
      * 1. Only 14% of evangelical and mainline Protestants say that “overall, modern science does more harm than good”
        2. Only 22% of evangelicals are very interested in new scientific discoveries (compared to 31% in the general public) but 37% are very interested in new medical discoveries (compared to 40% in the general public)
        3. Cf. Scheitle 2011:
           1. Most students, even among the religious, do not hold a conflict perspective
           2. More students move away from a conflict view than toward it
   2. Myth 2: Religious People Do Not Like Scientists
      1. Though some believe scientists don’t like them
         1. Percentage who agree that “most scientists are hostile to religion”
            1. 36% of Evangelical Protestants
            2. 19% of Mainline Protestants
            3. 20% of Catholics
   3. Myth 3: Religious People Are All Young-Earth Creationists
      1. Cf. Hill 2014:
         1. Religion does, however, predict creationist belief more strongly than education.
         2. But social networks serve an important role.
            1. Religiosity only corresponds to maintenance of creationist belief if individuals are embedded in networks of like-minded individuals.
   4. Myth 5: Religious People Are All Climate Change Deniers
   5. Myth 6: Religious People Are Against Scientific Technology
2. What is at stake for religion: The real tensions are around who God is and the uniqueness of humans.
   1. Issues related to God and humans
      1. Ultimately, as Ecklund and Scheitle (2017) argue, a lot of the conflict for religious people comes from ideas about god, what it means to be human, and views of scientists. More specifically, they argue that how religious people approach science is shaped by two questions: What does science mean for the existence and activity of God? And, what does science mean for the sacredness of humanity?

**Class exercise**: Break into groups and read “The road to enhancement, via human gene editing, is paved with good intentions” by John Evans (*The Conversation*, updated Nov. 29, 2018: <https://theconversation.com/the-road-to-enhancement-via-human-gene-editing-is-paved-with-good-intentions-107677>). First in small groups, then with the class, discuss the following questions. Is it morally good or bad to genetically enhance babies? Who decides? Is there a definite line at which it is bad? Or is it truly a slippery slope? How, from the perspective of religious individuals, might this practice violate beliefs about human distinctiveness? Is there a non-religious argument that scientists should be careful not to “play God”?

* 1. Three specific issues related to God and humans:
     1. The origins of life / evolution
        1. In the US, evangelicals are more likely than other religious groups to be young-earth creationists, or believers that the world as we know it was created in six literal days as described in the Biblical book of Genesis (Ecklund and Scheitle 2017).
        2. But their views are also complex. Ecklund and Scheitle (2017) also find that, when given the option of picking multiple statements that describe their beliefs in human origins, 40 percent of evangelicals pick more than just one.
        3. Many religious people, even evangelicals, are likely to affirm evolution if it does not conflict with their beliefs about god’s sovereignty and involvement in the world.
     2. Reproductive Genetic Technologies (like CRSPR)
        1. Ecklund and Scheitle (2017) “find that 23% of Evangelicals claim that “disease” RGTs are morally wrong, while only 8% of Jews and 9% of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains have this evaluation.”
        2. The majority of members of all religious groups—not just evangelicals (who are particularly disapproving)—disapprove of “enhancement” RGTs.
     3. Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research
        1. Many religious people speak out against Human embryonic stem cell research (HESCR) for the same reasons they speak out against abortion: it symbolizes the destruction of human life. Thus, the issue has become connected with conversations about abortion, especially for US evangelicals and Catholics.
        2. “Almost two-thirds (about 66 percent) of evangelicals believe that destroying human embryos in the context of trying to cure diseases is morally wrong. This compares with 50 percent of Catholics, 46 percent of mainline Protestants, 32 percent of adherents of non-Western religions, 28 percent of Jews, and 20 percent of the religiously unaffiliated.”
        3. HESCR not involving embryos finds much less resistance from religious groups, although evangelicals

**Day 3: Do scientists dislike religion?**

*Readings for students*:

[1] Bolger, Daniel, Robert A Thomson Jr., and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2019. “Selection versus Socialization? Interrogating the Sources of Secularity in Global Science.” *Sociological Perspectives*. doi: 10.1177/0731121419835507

[2] Ecklund, Elaine Howard, and Elizabeth Long. 2011. “Scientists and Spirituality.” *Sociology of Religion* 72(3): 253-274.

[3] Johnson, David R, Elaine Howard Ecklund, Di Di, Kirstin R.W. Matthews. 2016. “Responding to Richard: Celebrity and (Mis)Resprsentation of Science.” *Public Understanding of Science*, 27(5): 535-549.

*Goals for the day*:

* Analyze the impact of elite public discourse on public perceptions of scientists
* Understand the diversity of religious identity and practice among scientists
* Connect religious inclusivity to gender and racial inclusivity

*Suggestions for Class Time*:

**Opening question (think/pair/share):** What do scientists think about religious people?

**Lecture/Discussion:**

1. Richard Dawkins and celebrity science (cf. Johnson et al. 2016)
   1. Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9uhE4CT2xM>
      1. Discuss as class: What kind of moral language do you hear from Dawkins?
      2. What are his implied limits of science and/or religion?
      3. Do you think Dawkins helps or hurts the cause of promoting acceptance of science among religious individuals?
   2. Is the conflict paradigm empirically accurate?
      1. Evangelical, Catholic, and Muslim ideas about science and religion conflicts as really being about different versions of who god is, what it means to be human, and mistrust of scientists as public actors
         1. Although many authors (Evans and Evans 2008; Evans 2015; Scheitle and Ecklund 2017) make the conversation about the extent of a religion/science conflict more nuanced, none argue that such a conflict, at least in the public sphere, does not exist (philosophers, theologians, historians do though). Thus, what are these modern day public conflicts about?
            1. Evans (2015), who also co-authored the 2008 piece, argues that the problem is not epistemological nor is there necessarily any conflict at all—it is the result of the rules of public debate. The so-called conflict narrative has pervaded the public imagination because key figures on both sides of the religion-science debate, like Pat Robertson and Richard Dawkins, have used a rhetorical style that limits engagement. Essentially, there has been little useful debate because the key figures on both sides are not following the rules of good debate.
2. Religion among scientists: Myths versus reality (see Ecklund 2010)
   1. Myth 1: Atheists are always hostile to religion.
   2. Myth 2: Spiritualty doesn’t matter.
      1. Cf. Ecklund and Long 2011
         1. Many scientists seek “identity-consistent spirituality”
         2. Their spirituality tends to be congruent with science
         3. Their spirituality is often disconnected from theism
         4. Their spirituality is often connected to nature
         5. They see their spirituality as having an ethical dimension
   3. Myth 3: Science is a major cause of unbelief.
      1. Cf. Bolger et al. 2019
         1. Many scientists do say that science made them less religious
         2. But the strongest predictor of scientist religiosity was whether they were religious as teenagers
            1. Academic science tends to disproportionately attract those who were already non-religious (strong selection effects)
         3. Those who disaffiliated since childhood usually point to factors outside of science as a reason for their disaffiliation
   4. Myth 4: There are no religious scientists.
      1. Wide variation across nations in % of scientists who are atheist (covered in the next week)
      2. Most scientists in the US don’t believe there is a conflict between religion and science (see Ecklund et al. 2019)
         1. only 29% do; 57% believe they are independent, 13% hold the collaboration view
         2. 30% of biologists/physicist in the US identify as religious
         3. Only 35% say there is no God
3. Implications for social representation in science
   1. Women and some racial minorities—such as African Americans (5% of US science and engineering workforce) and Latinos (6%), are highly underrepresented in science (<https://ncses.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf19304/>).
      1. Class Discussion: Is diversity good or bad for science? What are the impacts of racial/gender underrepresentation to the aims of science? How does racial/gender underrepresentation impact mentorship and career success?
   2. In the US, women and racial minorities tend to be more religious than men and whites:
      1. Pew Research Center on race/religion (see: <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/racial-and-ethnic-composition/>)
         1. 83% of African Americans believe in God without doubt, compared to 61% of whites
         2. 75% of backs and 59% of Latinos say religion is very important, compared to 49% of whites
         3. African Americans also group with highest rates of service attendance and prayer
      2. Gender & religion (Pew Research Center: <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/gender-composition/>). In the US, women are more likely than men to:
         1. Believe in God
         2. Say religion is important
         3. Attend religious services
         4. Pray
   3. In the West, the scientific workplace is generally not a welcoming environment for religious individuals.
      1. According to Ecklund et al’s (2019) study on religion and science, a majority of biologists and physicists in the US believe their colleagues have a negative attitude about religion.
         1. 54% of unaffiliated scientists
         2. 65% of those who are Christians
   4. Religious inclusivity in science might therefore translate into racial and gender inclusivity
      1. To be sure, black and Latinos are also more likely to attend lower-resourced schools with poorer science education, suggesting that more equitable school funding is also part of the problem.
      2. But a major barrier to entering science for many who are religious is that they cannot think of themselves as scientists because they do not see scientists who are like them.

Suggestions for those interested in further reading

[1] Evans, Michael S. 2015. *Seeking Good Debate: Religion, Science, and Conflict in American Public Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

**Lecture/Discussion:**

**Day 4: Religion and Science across National Contexts**

*Readings for students*:

[1] Berger, Peter. 2014. “Chapter 5: Religion and Multiple Modernities” in *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age*. Pp. 68-78. De Gruyter.

[2] Ecklund, Elaine Howard, David R. Johonson, Christopher P. Scheitle, Kirstin R. W. Matthews, and Steven W. Lewis. 2016. “Religion among Scientists in International Context: A New Study of Scientists in Eight Regions.” *Socius* 2: 1-9.

[3] Evans, John H. 2014. “Faith in Science in Global Perspective: Implications for Transhumanism,” *Public Understanding of Science*, doi: 0963662514523712

*Goals for the day*:

* Appreciate the role of national context in shaping the science-religion interface
* Critique the western perspective of the religion-science interface

*Suggestions for Class Time*:

**Class exercise**: break into groups and read Ecklund, Elaine Howard, David R. Johnson, and Kirstin R.W. Matthews. 2016. “Opinion: Turkey’s Scientists Under Pressure.” *TheScientist*. <https://www.the-scientist.com/news-opinion/opinion-turkeys-scientists-under-pressure-32856>. First in small groups, then with the class, discuss the following questions. What is the relationship between science and religion in Turkey? How does this relationship impact both science and religion in Turkey? Does the relative religiosity of scientists in Turkey challenge or support what you think about the religiosity of scientists in general?

**Lecture/Discussion:**

1. Science in the global perspective (Stephan et al. 2015)
   1. Science as a discipline is becoming increasingly global in terms of international collaboration and migration
   2. Though inequality across national contexts persists in terms of resources, prestige, and status
2. Is the conflict narrative a Western paradigm?
   1. Religion and science during the Scientific Revolution
      1. Focus on empiricism was in part an act of resisting religious and political authority (Gieryn 1999)
   2. “Multiple modernities” (Berger 2014)
      1. Certain secular discourses—like discourses of technology, bureaucracy, and the capitalist market economy—exert pressure on religiosity
      2. But modernization is not always Westernization and the character of discourses can vary in ways that differentially influence religious expression
      3. In some nations, religion is a dominant paradigm.
         1. In Nigeria, vaccines were opposed by religious leaders because they were thought to be tools of Western governments to exert power and domination (Jegede 2007)
   3. Dimensions of difference across national contexts that influence the science-religion interface (Ecklund et al. 2019)
      1. Related to science
         1. levels of scientific infrastructure: <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2016/nsb20161/#/data> (Table 4-4)
         2. exposure to science & attitudes towards science
         3. political salience of issues related to science
         4. educational attainment
      2. Related to religion
         1. the composition of faith traditions: <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/04/05/the-changing-global-religious-landscape/>
         2. average levels of religiosity and secularity among general publics
         3. the relationship between religion and state governments.
      3. Other exogenous factors
         1. economic stability, security, and vulnerability
         2. political stability
         3. demographics
3. Religion among scientists in international context (Ecklund et al 2019)
   1. Wide variation cross-nationally in the share of scientists:
      1. who attend religious services weekly
         1. From 7% in France to 33% in Turkey
         2. Generally, scientists attend services less frequently than the public in their region, though with three exceptions: Taiwan, Hong Kong, and India.
            1. From page 155: “For example, a graduate student in biology[[3]](#footnote-3) said his ‘normal religious family’ is ‘not obsessive about all the rituals .. but we do observe fasts on days like Hunaman Jayanti, Rama Navami, or the Sravana month … the entire holy month we celebrate the Hindu festivals and all. During the Navratri, [we] do this aarti and the puja every night for goddess Durga and these things. But everything is normal. … That has helped me grow into a balanced Hindu when it comes to religion, not being too away from it and not being too much into it.”
      2. Who self-describe as religious
         1. From 16% in France to 59% in India
         2. More than half of scientists in Italy, Taiwan, Turkey, and India say they are religious
            1. Quote from a physicist[[4]](#footnote-4) in Turkey (pg. 130): “There must be a power, an energy. But you may call this Allah, or energy, or you’ll give it a different name. But there is something, though. A design, a symmetry within that design, the movement of the sky aligning with the movement of atoms, especially, it’s like an embroidery, [detailed] like a honeycomb, like the magnificence of a spider web. I mean, there are so many things.”
         3. A higher share of scientist than the general public say they are religious in Hong Kong and Taiwan
      3. A minority of scientists in every nation see science and religion as in conflict
         1. More than half of scientists in France, Italy, Taiwan, and the US see the relationship through the independence model
         2. More scientists see the relationship as one of collaboration rather than conflict in Hong Kong, India, Taiwan, Turkey
         3. Conflict view most pronounced in western countries
            1. From pg. 90, a French physicists[[5]](#footnote-5) explained “If being religious is saying that what is written in the Bible is true then of course there is a problem. … I cannot understand how you can take literally the Bible and be a physicist. For me it’s clearly incompatible.”
            2. Compared to pg. 114, statement by biologist in Italy[[6]](#footnote-6): “I was struggling with the principle behind these impossible phenomenon in the physical world, for example the conception of Jesus Christ, the virginity of Holy Mary, the miracles, the resurrection, you know? … How can you explain it? … So the real point is whether I was believing… in the holiness of Jesus. And if the answer to the question was yes, then I don’t have to explain it rationally—the miracles, the resurrection or anything else.”

**Student in-class reflection (think/pair/share):** What do you see as the implications of this cross-national variation on how the relationship between religion and science is discussed in the public square?

1. Case Study (notes to instructor): select a chapter from Ecklund et al (2019) – the chapter on Taiwan & Hong Kong is recommended -- and present a summary of the social, cultural, and historical context of the region, as well as levels of religiosity of scientists versus the publics in their respective regions, how scientists characterize the science and religious interface, and other relevant topics. This presentation can be used as a model for how the advanced research assignment described below is performed (if assigned).

Suggestions for those interested in further reading

[1] Gieryn, Thomas F. 1999. *Cultural Boundaries of Science: Credibility on the Line*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

[2] Jegede, Ayodele Samuel. 2007. “What Led to the Nigerian Boycott of the Polio Vaccination Campaign?” *PLoS Med* 4(3): e73. (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1831725/>)

[3] Stephan, Paula, Chiara Franzoni, and Giuseppe Scellato. 2015. “Global Competition for Scientific Talent: Evidence from Location Decisions of PhDs and Postdocs in 16 Countries.” *Industrial and Corporate Change* 25(3):457–485.

*Assessments (2 options)*

1. Critical reflection on public voices: View the following excerpts about the science and religion:
   1. Neil deGrass Tyson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAQL9gRmq34>
   2. Mayim Bialik: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZh1MrDHLoY>
   3. Bishop Robert Barron: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnDQLA2o-kI>
   4. Matt Powell (Christian pastor): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=65&v=hxtwoAlP-7g>

Address the following questions. How do these cultural elites characterize the relationship between science and religion? What are the ultimate stakes of the argument motivating their stances? What boundaries do they draw? What emotions do they attempt to evoke? How do voices of cultural elites influence public understanding of science and religion? How might personal networks and political ideology shape the way individuals respond to these voices?

1. Advanced research assignment: Select one of the 8 national contexts identified in Ecklund et al.’s (2016) article “Religion among Scientists in International Context: A New Study of Scientists in Eight Regions” (*Socius* 2: 1-9). Identify the social, historical, political, and economic forces that might influence patterns of religiosity among scientists in that region?

1. Van Biema, David. 2006. “God vs. Science,” Time, November 5. Accessed from (http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1555132,00.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. RASIC\_IND24j, biology, male, graduate student, conducted 5/21/14 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. RASIC\_TK21, physics, female, full professor, conducted 5/27/15 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. RASIC\_FR19, physics, male, director of research, conducted 7/11/15 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. RASIC\_IT36, biology, male, professor, conducted 9/26/14 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)