

Political Ideologies Contexts, Ideas, and Practices
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Wk9 Topic 9 Theocracy and Fundamentalism Lec 1/3 46:24
Definitions Theocracy - Main Themes, Main Problems, with Examples.

Right! Hello again everyone. We're ready to go on to our ninth topic, the ninth out of twelve, in our NPTEL ideologies course 2019-20. This topic is Theocracy and Fundamentalism. We'll take them separately. They are other different things and we'll look at theocracy first and then we'll go on to fundamentalism, which has had a lot of attention, quite rightly so, over the last 35 or 40 years, perhaps a bit longer than that.

But what about theocracy, that's our first topic of the two. Theocracy means rule by a priesthood, or rule in accordance with religious principles. Fundamentalism involves an insistence on the literal truth of a particular book or a particular set of prophecies or principles as the only basis for any given faith. So, theocracy is rule by a priesthood or rule in accordance with religious principles. But fundamentalism requires the insistence, requires that we insist on the literal truth of a book or a set of religious principles as the only basis for any given faith and perhaps even the only form of that faith, the only acceptable form.

Well, let's start on theocracy. There are comparatively few genuine theocracies in today's world. The Vatican City State is one, another was Iran from 1979 to 1997. Now, between 1979 and 1989, in Iran, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the supreme religious and political leader, was the main and often the sole source of religious and political authority. What he said went. Of course, all over the world there are religious movements which would like to create or impose theocracies, but in some democracies such movements are banned from standing for election. India, for example, prohibits the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the RSS, from contesting elections. The RSS was banned between February 1948 and July 1949. It does exert political influence through political parties like the Bharatiya Janata Party or the BJP, and perhaps has a great deal of influence with its thinking on people who are not necessarily members of the BJP, but are sympathizers or as we may say fellow travellers, irrespective of their position in the state or the commercial sector or whatever.

Now similarly, in the United States many of the various groups broadly called The New Christian Right have considerable influence on politicians and the whole political climate at all levels, even though few of their particular members stand for election. Some do and they get an awful

lot of publicity and often win campaigns and seats as we shall see, but when we consider that, the scale, the size of The New Christian Right in the United States, we can say that, yes, they do have considerable influence on the whole political climate but not many do actually stand for election.

But let's look at some examples of theocratic rule, explicitly theocratic rule. One was the period of Taliban government in Afghanistan. This lasted from 1996 to 2001, and in that time, the whole of society was organized by the Taliban on strict religious lines in accordance with a particular version of Islam. The Taliban banned women's education, they required all women to wear the burqa and men to grow beards, and they strictly regulated relations between the sexes. Transgressions of any law were tried by religious courts and punishments were in accordance with the priests' interpretation of a particular Islamic code.

Iranian theocracy was somewhat different; it was more complex. Even though the theocracy did, as theocracies do, and in this case it Islamized all, or Islamized all aspects of Iranian life. For example, all women in Iran had to wear the headscarf and chador, restrictions on polygamy were lifted, public floggings or executions were carried out for adultery, and homosexuality incurred the death penalty. In addition, the Elected National Assembly was called the Islamic Consultative Assembly. And all the laws it passed had to be ratified by the Council of Guardians. That was composed of 12 lawyers, six religious lawyers and six secular ones.

This council, the Council of Guardians, ensured that all laws conformed to their interpretation of Islamic principles. In any case political power lay with the Council of the Islamic Revolution; that was a body made up of Khomeini, the Ayatollah Khomeini, and 14 other senior clerics. And this body was dissolved when the first Parliament was formed in August 1980, after the death of Khomeini. So this body, the Council of the Islamic Revolution, was dissolved.

Now the theocracy permeated the whole of Iranian life, government policy was communicated to the public at Friday prayers in Tehran, but Iran has long traditions, very long, several centuries long, of political, religious and cultural diversity and this includes a Jewish population of about 9,000 people, who've lived there for over 3,000 years.

After Khomeini died in 1989, the much more moderate Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani rose from the speakership of the National Assembly to be elected president. He was succeeded by the more conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who was elected to the presidency in 2005, and

Ahmadinejad won a second term in 2009, but he did so amid widespread allegations of electoral fraud.

In 2013, the current president, Hassan Rouhani, was elected and immediately changed the whole tone of Iranian politics, especially in foreign affairs. He adopted, Rouhani adopted a much less confrontational tone and manner than his predecessors had done. He became the first Iranian head of state since the Shah of Iran to speak directly with the U.S. President. In September 2013, Rouhani was on his way to Kennedy Airport after the annual United Nations General Assembly and while he was on his way to the airport, he and Barack Obama had a 15-minute telephone conversation. Secondly, Mr Rouhani has maintained talks with the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council plus Germany, that is a group called the P5+1, over Iran's nuclear programme.

And, on all the published evidence, Iran has stuck closely to the nuclear programme as laid down by this group, the P5+1. More recently, in face of severe tensions with the United States, Iran says, if I am not mistaken that it will, that it is withdrawing from the agreement, from the nuclear agreement. Again, if I'm not mistaken, Iran still maintains that it has no military uses or no intention to use nuclear power for military purposes.

Iran does, we must remember, remain a theocracy, and it is virtually certain that Mr Rouhani's main policies have the approval of the country's highest religious authority, that is, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, but it is equally true that Iran has not attacked any other country for something like 240 years.

So theocracies vary in their specific forms and they may change over time, but within them political position status depend on position and status within the religious hierarchy. In strict theocracies almost all areas of life are run on specified religious lines, but some theocracies are less rigid than others, and some theocratic leaders are often thoughtful and subtle in international dealings. Rouhani may well be an example of that. Well, theocracy in many ways is conceptually perhaps less awkward, less tricky, than fundamentalism. There are not many explicit theocracies around the world even though religious bodies have had very great influence in many, many democracies. The Republic of Ireland is one example, predominantly and strongly Catholic; Spain and Portugal as well, are good examples, France has a powerful and influential Catholic Church, but we must remember that with the Republic of Ireland and with Spain and Portugal accession to the European Economic Community, in the case of

Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, in 1981 and in the case of Spain of Portugal, in if I am not mistaken, with I beg your pardon, in the case of Ireland in 1973, in the case of Spain and Portugal and Greece in 1981.

Well, accession to the EEC brought about enormous changes in the everyday tone and temper of life and very significantly altered the direct influence of the Catholic Church in all three countries. We covered in our topic on feminism, we also covered the fact that the Republic of Ireland has recently had a referendum in which the public decided to end, decided that the ban on abortion should be ended, so that kind of change may not have been that easily foreseeable thirty years ago in the Republic of Ireland, but it has happened.

But what about fundamentalism? All religions and many political movements have had, and perhaps always have had, fundamentalist tendencies or factions. Secondly, there is nothing new about fundamentalism. In the 15th and early 16th century, the German Anabaptist priest Thomas Müntzer, and in the 16th century the Swiss French Protestant Jean Calvin, were both fundamentalists. Calvin, or Calvin as he is known around the world was highly active in politics. Both of them created, you know, in their own way created a theocracy which wielded great power, Calvin, particularly, was enormously powerful and created a theocracy which was very - very powerful in the Swiss city state of Geneva.

Now, some fundamentalist groups have withdrawn from society, not all are active and campaigning and proselytizing and so on. Some groups have withdrawn from society to lead lives which are self-contained and peaceable. One such group is the Amish community in the New England region of the United States. Today's Amish are descended from 17th century German Protestant farmers and they lead the same kinds of lives as their forebears did. They grow all their own food. They build their own houses from materials they've made themselves. They use horses and horse-drawn wagons for transport and they use no electricity. They speak the kind of German their ancestors spoke and they're completely self-sufficient. They have virtually no contact with anyone outside their villages, and as they take nothing from any public authority they're are exempt from U.S. taxes whether federal or local. I understand they are also exempt from national service of any kind and I, if I'm not mistaken, the Amish are allowed to remove their children from school, I think in the 8th grade of school, I'm not sure of the exact point at which children can be removed, but I understand they have this, the Amish have this option of removal.

So it's probably, in view of the range of fundamentalism or fundamentalist types and the range of movements, it's probably more accurate to talk in terms of fundamentalisms rather than fundamentalism as a single ideology. They all seem to arise, fundamentalist groups and movements seem to arise in several different cultures. We must also remember that very few fundamentalist groups call themselves fundamentalists, far more often they describe themselves as evangelists after the Greek word *evangelion*, which means 'good news', or they describe themselves as revivalists or conservatives or traditionalists.

In general individuals' position in a fundamentalist state or movement is connected, yes, is connected to their position in the religious hierarchy, but almost none of the major fundamentalist leaders has been a conventionally successful priest making their way upwards through the hierarchy of an established religion. Now, this, this fact has to do with the main themes of fundamentalism.

We'll cover them today. They are, to start with, religion and politics. This combination is almost central to all forms of fundamentalism. Religion and politics it's a central theme in fundamentalism, virtual all forms of it, except perhaps the most reclusive ones. So in effect almost all fundamentalist movements are politico religious in character, and they explicitly set out to take control of the political space so that they can impose their version of their faith.

All but the most reclusive fundamentalist movements are intensely involved in politics; most of them, if not all of them, actively aim to achieve political dominance and to transform the whole of political life in accordance with their own religious doctrines and principles. Fundamentalism, like fascism, obliterates all distinctions between public and private life.

This obliteration is in part a response to the global spread of different forms of broadly liberal democracy. Liberal democracy, in its multiple forms, generally allows freedom of religious belief and they are few with a very few liberal democracies or liberal democracies founded on liberal lines, which restrict freedom of religious belief. So - liberal democracy broadly allows freedom of religious belief and religious observance including the practice of religion, but it usually restricts these to the private sphere, and democracy can even rule certain practices within faiths illegal. Several democracies have created laws which allow followers to act in ways, which their own faith would prohibit. For example, the Guttmacher Institute in the United States, which conducts a great deal of research on sexual practices attitudes and behavior, the Guttmacher Institute have published work showing that 98 percent of American women who identify

themselves as Catholic and have ever had sex have used a non-natural form of contraception. That is a practice banned by the Church of Rome, which allows only abstinence or sexual activity based on the menstrual cycle or for consumption, I beg your pardon, for reproduction. Now that was called the rhythm method, you may have heard of the term, and I hope I have got an up-to-date comment there on the Church of Rome's practice, but a non-natural form of contraception would be banned by the Church of Rome, still is, and yet 98 percent of American women who have ever had any form sex and identify themselves as Catholic have used a non-natural form of contraception. Now, no doubt, the United States law allows that and would not prohibit such a practice because the Catholic Church forbids it. Now, this is true of a great many liberal democracies anyway.

So what are the effects then of modern democracy? Modern democracy has the general effect of secularizing society by reshaping the forms religious observance itself takes. Now modern democracy doesn't say we have to do that, that would be a bit of a contradictory in terms, but it's a broad effect observable in a great many democratic societies, in a very great many democratic states. In India, the law requires those organizing large religious festivals to cease the public use of loudspeakers and to conclude events like processions by 10:30 p.m. Similar obtains with firecrackers, purportedly in one particular religious tradition, but very widely used at Diwali or Deepavali, and yet the law says, cease the public nuisance after 10:30 p.m., at which point it becomes a public nuisance. Very often people themselves reshape their own religious practices. In the United Kingdom, there has been a continuing and if I am not mistaken, it's still a continuing decline in church attendance, particularly within the Anglican denomination. But a majority of people still turn to the church for baptisms, weddings, and funerals. In India, even if reliable figures may be hard to obtain, substantial numbers of people do not observe their particular faith very strictly and often breach many of its tenets, even though they continue to hold the usual religious ceremonies for naming babies and for weddings and funerals.

Now fundamentalist movements see such tendencies, such secularizing tendencies and developments, fundamentalist movements see these as utterly destructive and even degenerate. For them, the restriction of religion to a private space allows the public space to be pervaded by materialism, corruption, and immoral conduct - and the answer is to take over the hold of life, that is, to take over institutions of state, social practices, the economy and everything else and start afresh.

We are familiar with fundamentalist movements who claim that that is precisely their intention and we've seen plenty around the world who have attempted to do precisely that whenever they have gained power.

So what are we to understand by fundamentalist versions of religion? What do they look like? Well, we know that most fundamentalists, religious fundamentalist refer to themselves by other labels, evangelists or traditionalists or whatever, but a fundamentalist outlook means what it says. It requires that we return to the basics or fundamental principles of a faith. Sometimes this means asserting the literal truth of a holy book. Many American protestant fundamentalist believe in creationism, the doctrine that God created the world in six days, as the book of Genesis states.

That kind of focus on the fundamental principles in a holy book is of course possible only if the faith in question has a book. Nevertheless, the attempts to assert fundamental principles is found in all fundamentalisms. Hinduism has its own share of people and groups who assert such fundamental principles and even impose them or try to impose them on others. Typically such movements state very few principles. Fundamentalist movements in general state very few principles, and that is so that they can assert their message quickly and clearly.

In addition, the message is often part of a very strong assertion of identity. Fundamentalism also has a powerful, often has, a powerful psychological appeal, and many fundamentalist leaders are highly charismatic characters. We've seen them, today we see them all the time on the net, on the television, on YouTube and goodness knows where else as well as, on television channels dedicated to propagating fundamentalist doctrines.

So - the third main concept we need to look at in fundamentalism is anti-modernism. All forms of fundamentalism, whether they are activist or retreatist, are deeply hostile to modernity. They usually see it as the source of moral decay. For example, for them the loss or weakening of religious authority is a sign of moral decay; so is the spread, however partial and incomplete of women's rights, even the very existence of worker's rights and trade unions is a source of moral decay, right? Certainly the spread of women's rights can seem to threaten a divine order which specifies men's and women's roles in society and boys' and girls' roles, and the way they're brought up and so on. The existence of worker's rights and trade unions, of course, provides an alternative source of authority and association and a space where people can talk about their

situation. We should not be surprised that fundamentalism often fears, that fundamentalist movements often feel deeply threatened by, such things.

They are also threatened by many other features of modernity. They often find, fundamentalist movements often find modernity so repulsive that they hark back to some past golden age of moral stability when traditions were unquestioned and everybody knew right from wrong. Almost all fundamentalist movements, however, are extremely adept users of all the latest technologies. Even in the early 1970s, United States evangelists used television. They made their own programmes for dedicated Sunday morning prime-time slots and they used it use television so effectively that they became known as televangelists, and they had followings of millions, more recently groups like Al Qaeda and Islamic state in Iraq and Syria, more widely known as, more commonly known as ISIS, have used social media very successfully to recruit from all over the world, [And] with their techniques including making very sophisticated promotional CDs and constructing highly professional websites. So - fundamentalist movements are often utterly repelled by modernity but they use the techniques of modernity extremely well, with great skill and sophistication and to great effect.

Another area has to do with weaponry; another issue has to do with weaponry. Militant fundamentalist groups are also very good at acquiring and using weapons. This shows certainly that such groups are often very well-funded, so indeed a non-militarized movements like the New Christian Right in the United States are often very well-funded, and it also shows that when it comes to imposing their will, militant fundamentalist groups have no problem using some of the most terrible instruments of modernity.

When they are at war fundamentalist groups have often captured large stocks of lighter weapons, such as rifles and machine-guns, from forces they have defeated or they have gained access to weapons stores in areas where the official military or militias are badly run or corrupt or perhaps even sympathizers. The weapons can include rocket launchers and that's documented. One sample alone of ISIS weapons came from 21 countries including the United States, Russia and Former Soviet Republics, China, and Serbia. ISIS themselves and now they, and I'm sure they're still; I don't doubt that they're still doing this - they're now using oxyacetylene torches, welding torches, to remove manufacturer's markings or even to add new serial numbers so as to make tracking harder if the weapons are captured or whatever.

Some tracking organizations, nevertheless, have identified the geographical progress of particular types of weapons or even individual weapons. And there is documentation on that, there's a group called Conflict Armament Research and I've cited them in the textbook, you might wish to follow up their work by looking at their website.

Well, another main principle in fundamentalism is that of militancy and violence. A number of today's fundamentalist movements are explicitly vigorous militant and even very violent. Secondly, many of them hold to a Manichaeian worldview that is, one which divides the world into good, meaning their idea of the good, their own idea the good and evil, that's all the rest. In addition most fundamentalisms are religious in nature. Religious conflicts tend to be terribly violent and have a long history of hate and mass slaughter.

Now, fundamentalist movements rarely hold office, but some, and we shall see this, like the New Christian Right in the United States, have very great influence and some engage in calculated violence by inspiring individual members to acts of violence which can have enormous effects. In 1948 Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu fundamentalist. The Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was murdered by a Jewish fanatic in 1995. The Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat was assassinated by Islamic fundamentalists in 1981, and in 1984, Sikh extremists murdered Indira Gandhi. In the United States, clinics which perform lawful abortions have been fire-bombed, and at least one doctor working in such a clinic has been murdered. Among acts by fundamentalist movements, well, we'll be aware of the Al-Qaeda attacks in the United States in 2001 on the 11th of September, 9/11, which killed over 3,000 people and we're only too well aware of the resulting - illegal - U.S. led invasion of Iraq and its aftermath.

The aftermath, the after-effects have probably resulted in over a million deaths and have brought about lasting political violence in much of the Middle East. In 2001, after the attacks the then president of the United States, George W. Bush, said in a speech to both houses of the U.S. congress, "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists,"; that reaction to the 9-11 attacks was a Manichaeian utterance. It may well have stemmed from Mr Bush's own born-again fundamentalism, his Christian fundamentalism.

Even without force fundamentalists can create a climate of fear, and this can happen without force. There's a very telling example of this. In 1983, a fundamentalist Protestant family called the Mozerts, M O Z E R T, the family who were called the Mozerts, brought a civil action against

their local municipal school authorities. And the old municipal authority were Hawkins County Public Schools in the American state of Tennessee. The Mozerts brought an action over a picture they had seen in a Civics textbook for 4th grade pupils, that is, children aged eight or nine. The picture showed, one picture showed boys cooking for girls and the Mozerts argued in court that this was a violation, or represented a violation, of the divine order of things.

The case was finally concluded in 1987, four years later, when a federal court working locally ruled that exposing the picture to the children did not amount to an attempt by Hawkins County to indoctrinate them. But the consequences showed the power and influence of the New Christian Right. First, the Mozerts removed their children from the public education system and put them in a private school with a very strong fundamentalist ethos. That meant their children would grow up in isolation from children whose families practised the same faith in less extreme ways and certainly in isolation from children of other faiths or no faith at all, yet in a democratic polis, an essential aim of education is surely the development of pupils and students capacity to make autonomous and informed judgments on the issues facing them and their fellow citizens, and to maintain an informed respect for and tolerance of diversity, that is, tolerance of and respect for their fellow citizens, the other people who grow up with and will have to live with. Children can't do this, they can't learn this, if they go to school in isolation from one another, and that is, go to school in schools which are vastly separated from one another by class, faith or geography. I draw that point from a philosopher education called Brighouse, who wrote a book in 2006 on the philosophy of education.

The second issue here, let us remember the municipal authorities Hawkins County won the case, the ruling was that exposure by itself does not count as indoctrination, exposing the picture to the children was not the same as indoctrinating them, but the municipal authorities won the case. And nevertheless, the books publishers Holt, Rinehart and Winston, a famous and long-established firm, removed the passages concerned from subsequent editions of the book. There seems to be no published evidence as to whether or not the publishers received any actual threats; it is possible and has been suggested in print that the publishers Holt, Rinehart and Winston were deeply fearful of the influence, the wealth and power, of the New Christian Right in the United States in the early 1980s and of course since then.

So, we've covered the main ideas in, the main concepts in, fundamentalism and or I should say fundamentalisms, and the consequences and implications of those main concepts, principles,

and ideas. Well, what about fundamentalisms and other ideologies? I'll just mention these briefly and we'll come back to this next time.

Fundamentalisms and other ideologies – well, first of all there's a parallel between fundamentalism and fascism and a fairly obvious one. Both regard the present as decayed and corrupt, you'll remember the fascist ideal of a wonderful agrarian agricultural past of stability where everybody knew what they were doing, and things went on as before and everybody had belonged to the land and the land belonged to them because they had lived there for centuries and tilled it for centuries and so on. Modernity, in contrast, for fascism is deeply corrupt, and fundamentalism too regards modernity as deeply corrupt.

So both those doctrines, fundamentalism and fascism, conclude that the only way ahead lies in strictly following a small number of very explicit and very rigid principles. For both, dissent is betrayal and it must be expunged, violently if needed. But fascist doctrines stress the idea of a pure and glorious past. Fundamentalism looks much more towards some gloriously purified future. This is often called a millenarian outlook and according to some fundamentalist theories this glorious future will only come about after some terrible event, like a virulent disease or a world war or a global natural disaster, has made humans see the light and repent of their previous ways. This kind of outlook is sometimes called Apocalypticism.

Now, let's take a quick look at another ideology here, which has some apparent similarity to fundamentalism and this is conservatism. Remember conservatism is also committed to a traditional order from the past. Serious conservatism though, is somewhat different. It is cautious about change, but does not reject it. Secondly, conservatism rejects the adoption or imposition of grand theories of morality or politics or society. Most fundamentalisms on the other hand impose a comprehensive theory involving all three, a theory of morality, a theory of politics, and a theory of society. And they cannot tolerate difference or dissent; for them, as with fascism, dissent, disagreement, even minor queries, amount to betrayal. Well, how then do fundamentalisms relate to religious differences? Most of the politically active forms of fundamentalism are openly and often bitterly hostile to other faiths and they often inflict terrible violence on followers of other faiths. Some fundamentalist movements consider those who follow other faiths to be subhuman, a parallel there with fascism, another parallel. But fundamentalist movements have as much of a problem with other forms of their own faith as they do with other faiths. For many fundamentalists, less rigid followers of the same faith or followers of another sect within the same faith are an even greater enemy than those who follow

another faith or have no faith. Examples are not difficult to find, at least in theory ISIS - Islamic State in Iraq and Syria is committed to exterminating something like 200 million followers of Shia Islam, precisely because the ISIS view that any diversion from its idea of strict Qur'anic practice amounts to a denial of the Qur'an's perfection. So for fundamentalism disagreement or dissent amount to betrayal or apostasy, that is, to the denial of precious and all-important principles.

At worst, that can mean that fundamentalists use violent methods to eliminate less rigid and more tolerant versions of their own faiths. For example, ISIS have reportedly killed recruits who have started to question the ways ISIS has imposed upon them. There are reports too that ISIS have killed recruits, volunteers, no matter whom, who have tried to return to their own countries.

This may be an inevitable consequence of the very nature of fundamentalism. A fundamentalist outlook reduces major religions to a small number of very simple propositions, but this means that fundamentalism can have no response to the complex problems of everyday life. It also means that fundamentalism often has to reduce substantial weighty bodies of - mighty bodies of religious thought - to minimal and rigid rules. Well, it's obvious, it hardly needs saying, that everyday life can pose religious problems. We have seen this in the case of contraceptive use among American Catholic women. Similarly, there are, those Indians who perhaps illegally would not let their own houses out to people of other castes, I say perhaps illegally, the law may be quite complex on this. There are plenty of Indians who would not let their own houses out to people of other castes or faiths in India, but they may have no problem leasing other people's properties in other countries irrespective of the owners' faith or dietary habits, and may have no problem over letting their own overseas properties out irrespective of the tenants' faith and customs involved. We must remember here, that in a great many countries around the world, significant elements of anti-discriminatory law or anti-discrimination law may also be involved.

Those are the kinds of complexities that life poses for us, and yet fundamentalism may have no response to such complexities, largely because it has no space for any kind of moral uncertainty or moral complexity - and has no space for doubt about what the right action might be in a complex and uncertain situation. Now that then means that its responses are going to be inevitably rigid and formulaic, and there are followers of fundamentalism who have sometimes left fundamentalist movements precisely for that, or who have had great emotional, mental, spiritual, moral torment over the kinds of formulaic responses they have been given to complexities and problems they have introduced, they have encountered in their own lives.

So I'll briefly introduce here contexts for the rise of fundamentalism and we'll come back to these next time. Just mention them briefly, we'll do them in more detail next time. The reasons, of course, for the emergence and the spread and the hold to fundamentalism vary across faiths and cultures.

Well fundamentalism seems particularly to arise in societies which face what they or groups within them think are serious crises of identity or meaning. These can include the prospect of significant changes to the social structure or social order, even though such changes or challenges can take very different forms. Let's talk very briefly about a couple of examples here; in the United States, Christian fundamentalists that is, overwhelmingly white Protestants were very troubled by the expansion of the public sphere in the last three decades after the Second World War. In that period the Supreme Court ruled against prayers in schools because these violated the constitutional right to religious freedom. The federal government greatly expanded urban development programs and funding for public education at every level. Some of that funding was specifically for those who'd served in the war, like the servicemen's, for example, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 provided a wide range of benefits including funds for university education.

Many traditionally religious Protestants felt that their ways of life were being threatened and their anxieties were intensified by the invention of the contraceptive pill, which became widely available in the early 1960s. The pill enables women to control their own fertility and to do so entirely of their own volition, and if they wish, without anyone else's knowledge. Now the United States Protestant traditionalists were among many groups around the world who feared that for a range of reasons this form of women's empowerment would undermine what they thought of, as the traditional family, with implications that the traditional family was an expression of some kind of divine order. We'll come back to these points in more detail next time and that is where we'll look at the relations between, well, fundamentalism and either ideologies, we have seen that, and we'll look at the relation between fundamentalism and modernity. It's a fascinating area, and we'll come back to that next time.