



**MALAYSIAN ASSOCIATION FOR AMERICAN STUDIES(MAAS)
& CENTRE FOR AMERICAN STUDIES (KAMERA),
INSTITUTE OF OCCIDENTAL STUDIES (IKON)
SEMINAR SERIES 2008**

Title:

**“Render unto Caesar...: Conflicts concerning Church and State
in Contemporary America”**

Presenter:

Prof. Dr. Joseph R. Stimpfl
Department of Religious Studies
Webster University, Saint Louis, Missouri, USA

Discussants:

1. Mr. James Wong Wing On
Chief Analyst *Malaysiakini* & Vice-President, MAAS
2. Dr. John R. Gurusamy
Coordinator, Malaysian Interfaith Network

Chair:

Prof. K.S. Nathan
President, MAAS & Deputy Director, IKON

Venue, Date and Time:

Rumah Universiti, University of Malaya
50603 Kuala Lumpur
Thursday, 5 June 2008, 7:30 pm – 10.00 pm

Abstract

This presentation will describe the nature and origin of the American concept of “Separation of Church and State.” It will review some of the historical roots of religious identity in the United States. It will then discuss the nature of the contemporary conflicts associated with maintaining a secular state in the face of the several religious identities which powerfully express themselves in government and society. Finally, there will be a discussion of what the future might hold for religious practice and expression in the United States.

Biodata:

Joseph R. Stimpfl is currently a Visiting Fulbright Professor in the Department of Social, Development, and Environmental Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. He holds a Bachelor of Arts(1971) in English Literature, and Master of Education(1976) in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Missouri; and Master of Arts(1986) in Anthropology, and Doctor of Philosophy(1990) in Anthropology and Education from the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. He has held numerous administrative positions including as Director, Center for International Education(1999-2004) and Director, Center for Interdisciplinary Studies(2001-2004) in Webster University. Prof. Stimpfl has delivered numerous seminar papers and published widely in the field of religion, culture and society including identity and cultural issues in Southeast Asia.

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