

College of Charleston
Department of Religious Studies
Spring 2015

HONS 381: Evangelicalism in America Today
MW 3:25-4:40; MAYBANK HALL 320

Instructor: Dr. Elijah Siegler
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Office Hours: Tues 11-3 or by appointment

This course looks at evangelicalism in America culture from an interdisciplinary perspective. After defining “evangelicalism” and placing it in its historical contexts, this course will focus on specific themes including politics, youth culture, mass media, and gender. Readings will be taken from the flood of books and articles about evangelicalism that have appeared in the last 10 years or so, including novels, ethnographies, investigative journalism, popular non-fiction, and historical scholarship. We will attempt to understand how evangelicalism shapes (and is shaped by) various aspects of American culture.

Required Texts:

1. The Bible (any translation)
2. Randall **Balmer**, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*, 25th Anniversary ed.
3. Susan Friend **Harding**, *The Book of Jerry Falwell*
4. Mark **Noll**, *The Work We Have to Do: A History of Protestants in America*
5. Tom **Perrotta**, *The Abstinence Teacher*
6. Daniel **Radosh**, *Rapture Ready!*

There are also required short readings on OAKS. Print these out. Please bring the relevant book or printout to class. (Warning: some readings may be offensive.)

Assignments:

- *Serve as a discussion leader for one class, by introducing all of the readings for that day, and facilitating discussion: 5%
- * Write a 5 pp. review essay and make an oral presentation on the topic: 10%
- * Write a 5 pp. ethnography and make an oral presentation on the topic: 10%
- * Rewrite and expand one of the two papers mentioned above: 10%
- * Write a take-home essay midterm exam: 15%
- * Take a multiple-choice midterm quiz on Wed Feb 25: 5%
- * Write a take-home essay final exam, due Wed Feb 25: 15%
- * Take a multiple-choice final exam on Fri May 1: 10%
- *Be on time, active, and helpful for all class meetings: 20%

All work must be original and all sources correctly cited. The university's honor code will be strictly enforced. Students can find a complete version of the Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook, available online. Use of electronic devices during class time is strictly prohibited! Any exceptions must be cleared with me in advance.

Grading Scale: A: 93-100; A-: 90-92; B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82; C+: 77-79; C: 73-76; C-: 70-72; D+: 67-69; D: 63-66; D-: 61-62 F: 60 or below.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

PART I: INTRODUCTIONS

Mon Jan 12: Who is an Evangelical?

Read: Radosh 1-8; Balmer xv-xviii; Harding xv-xvi; "Awakenings" (OAKS); Goldberg 1-10 (OAKS)

Wed Jan 14: What does Evangelicalism have to do with popular culture?

Read: Radosh 9-43; (Recommended: Radosh 215-233)

Mon Jan 19: MLK Day!

Wed Jan 21: What does Evangelicalism have to do with politics?

Read: Goldberg 10-49 (OAKS); Balmer 41-45; Reagan (OAKS)

Mon Jan 26: What does Evangelicalism have to do with family structure?

Watch in Class: *Jesus Camp*

Read: Radosh 118-132; Balmer 91-93

Wed Jan 28: What have we learned so far? A Catch-up Discussion

PART II: HISTORIES

Mon Feb 2: What is the role of evangelicalism in American history (1620-1865)?

Read: Noll 14-72; Edwards (OAKS); Balmer 231-234

Wed Feb 4: What is the role of evangelicalism in American history (1865-1925)?

Read: Noll 82-96; Balmer 32-38, 45-47, 246-254

Monday Feb 9: What is the role of evangelicalism in American history (1925-1988)?

Special Guest Speaker: Dr. Charles Lippy

Read: Noll 98-123; Balmer 127-138, 146-175; Harding 10-23, 61-82

Wed Feb 11: What is the role of evangelicalism in American history (1988-present)?
Read: Willow Creek (OAKS); Balmer 326-350; Harding 104-124

PART III: BELIEFS AND MOVEMENTS

Mon Feb 16: What are biblicism and conversionism?
Read: Radosh 59-71; Balmer 193-199; Harding 33-60, 277-279; Balmer 93-106; The Bible, John 3:1-21

Wed Feb 18: What is premillennialism?
Read: Radosh 72-76; Balmer 48-66 (until “evangelistic ends”); Falwell/Lindsey (OAKS); The Bible, Book of Revelation

Mon Feb 23: How does premillennialism influence modern society?
Read: Harding 228-246; Johnson Frykholm (OAKS); Radosh 76-87

Wed Feb 25: Catch-Up/ Discussion/ **Midterm quiz**

Spring Break!

Mon Mar 9: What is creationism?
Read: Jennings Bryan (OAKS); Harding 210-227

Wed Mar 11: How does creationism influence modern society?
Read: Goldberg II 80-105 (OAKS); Radosh 276-294

Mon Mar 16: What is spiritual warfare?
Read: Radosh 88-117 (skim 105-110); “This Present Darkness” (skim 331-end) (OAKS); Monteith (OAKS)

PART IV: LIVED RELIGION

Wed Mar 18: College Life
Read: Balmer 138-149; Rosin (OAKS); Feldman (OAKS)

Mon Mar 23: Gender Roles
Read: Carpenter (OAKS); Harding 166-181

Wed Mar 25: Love and Sex
Read: Radosh 260-275; “Sex and Submission” (skim 184-190) (OAKS)

Mon Mar 30: Abstinence
Read: Radosh 249-259; “Dutch Teen Sex” (OAKS); Perrotta 3-69

Wed Apr 1: Sports

Read: Baker (OAKS); Wolverton (OAKS); Perrotta 73-149

Mon Apr 6: Youth Culture

Read: Radosh 133-151; Perrotta 153-242

Wed Apr 8: Manhood

Read: Perrotta 243-358, reading guide; "Promise Keepers" (OAKS)

Mon Apr 13: Music and Festivals

Special Guest Speaker: Prof. Courtney Tepera

Read: Radosh 152-186 (skim 175-184); Balmer 295-311; "Body-Piercing" (OAKS)

Wed Apr 15: The evangelical critique of evangelicalism

Read: Wallis (OAKS); "Building Congregations" (OAKS); Balmer 258-277, 375-377; Radosh 186-199

Mon Apr 20: What are evangelicals afraid of?

Read: O'Gieblyn (OAKS); Bivins (OAKS); Radosh 295-302

Wed Apr 22: Oral Presentation Catch-Up

Mon Apr 27: What have we learned?

Read: Radosh 303-308; Balmer 351-359, 363, 372-275, 377-378; Harding 270-276

Fri May 1, 4-7 PM: final exam and celebration

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Note: Students with documented disabilities who have been approved to receive accommodation through SNAP should feel free to discuss this during office hours. For more information, contact Disability Services at 953-1431.

A good resource for how to write a religious studies paper:

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/religious-studies/>

*Visit the **Center for Student Learning** for help with study strategies, speaking & writing skills, and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and the services are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at <http://csl.cofc.edu> or call (843)953-5635.*