

**College of Charleston
Department of Religious Studies
Fall 2012**

FYSM 160: EVANGELICALISM IN AMERICA
MW 2-3:15; Ed Center 219

Instructor: Dr. Elijah Siegler
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Office: 4 Glebe St. Entryway C
Office Hours: Tues and Fri 1-3 or by appointment

What does it mean to be an evangelical Christian in America today? We will answer this question from a variety of perspectives. After defining “evangelicalism” and placing it in its historical contexts, we will critically examine sites of evangelical activity such as Christian rock festivals, abstinence balls, international satellite TV networks, sex manuals, creation “science” museums, theme parks, bible trade shows, US army bases, summer camps, Hell Houses, and political rallies. We will visit churches, watch movies, look at websites, and read satirical novels and magazine articles. Most of all, we will have frank discussions about how evangelicalism shapes (and is shaped by) American culture.

Required Texts:

1. Susan Friend Harding, *The Book of Jerry Falwell*
2. Tom Perrotta, *The Abstinence Teacher*
3. Daniel Radosh, *Rapture Ready!*
4. The Bible

There are also required short readings on OAKS, which should be **printed** out. In the schedule of classes, the underlined texts are primary sources. Please bring the relevant book or printout to class. Warning: some of these texts are explicit and for mature audiences only!

Assignments:

Participation and attendance including the synthesis seminar (20%)
Practice writing (PW), 5 short ungraded papers (10%)
Book review essay and oral presentation (10%)
Research paper on current event (10%)
Comparative site visit paper (10%)
In-class introduction of reading and discussion starter (Part of P&A grade)
History Test (5%)
Take home essay midterm (15%)
Final exam (20%)

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.

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.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Wed Aug 22: What is this class about?

Watch: *Friends of God*

Mon Aug 27: What is religious studies?

Read: studyreligion.org; Handout: Horace Miner, "The Nacirema"

Wed Aug 29: What is evangelicalism?

Read: Radosh 1-8; Harding xv-18, 277-279; Goldberg (on OAKS) 1-10; Hankins (on OAKS) 1-3

Mon Sept 3: What is the role of evangelicalism in early American history?

Read: Hankins (on OAKS) 3-30

Wed Sept 5: What is the role of evangelicalism in 20th c. American history?

Read: Hankins (on OAKS) 30-45; Harding 61-82

Book Fair!

Mon Sept 10: What is the relationship between evangelicalism and politics?

Read: Goldberg (on OAKS) 10-49

History Test

Wed Sept 12: How do we interpret the language of evangelicalism?

Special Guest: Lindy Coleman on how to read difficult texts

Read: Harding 33-60; Radosh 59-71; The Bible, John 3:1-21

Mon Sept 17: How do we research evangelicalism? (Library Day)

Wed Sept 19: What does evangelicalism have to do with popular culture?

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

Mon Sept 24: How is evangelicalism like a business?

Read: Harding 105-124; "Willow Creek" (on OAKS)

Wed Sept 26: *Jesus Camp!*

Mon Oct 1: What do Evangelicals believe about the end of days?

Read: Harding 228-248; Lindsay/Falwell (on OAKS); The Bible, Book of Revelation

Wed Oct 3: What is “Left Behind”?
Read: Radosh 72-87; Johnson Frykholm (on OAKS)

Mon Oct 8: What is Creationism?
Read: Harding 210-227; Jennings Bryan (on OAKS)

Wed Oct 10: How is Creationism being propagated?
Read: Goldberg (on OAKS) 80-105; Radosh 276-294
Take home midterm assignment handed out

Fri Oct 12: **Take home midterm due in Religious Studies office**

(Mon Oct 15: FALL BREAK!)

Wed Oct 17: How do evangelicals view U.S. history and government?
Read: “Through a Glass” (on OAKS); “God’s Harvard” (on OAKS)

Mon Oct 22: What do evangelicals think of gender roles?
Read: Harding 166-194

Wed Oct 24 What do evangelicals think of sex?
Read: Radosh 260-275; “Sex and Submission” (on OAKS)

Mon Oct 29 What are the varieties of evangelical music?
Read: Radosh 152-199

Wed Oct 31: Happy Halloween! Watch *Hell House!*

Mon Nov 5: How do evangelicals use fear?
Read: Radosh 295-298; Bivins 28-37, 132-145 (on OAKS)

(Tues Nov 6: ELECTION DAY- no classes and please vote!)

Wed Nov 7: Who are evangelicals fighting against?
Read: Harding 153-166; “Teenage Holy War” (on OAKS); Radosh 88-117; “This Present Darkness” (on OAKS)

Mon Nov 12: What do evangelicals think of abstinence?
Read: Radosh 249-259; “Dutch Teen Sex” (on OAKS); Perrotta 3-69

Wed Nov 14: What is evangelical youth culture?
Read: Radosh. 118-151; Perrotta 73-149

(Mon Nov 19: Class Cancelled)
Comparative site visit paper due in Religious Studies office

(Wed Nov 21: Thanksgiving)

Mon Nov 26: How does evangelicalism appeal to teenagers?

Read: Perrotta 153-242; Carpenter (on OAKS)

Wed Nov 28: How does evangelicalism appeal to men?

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

Mon Dec 3: What have we learned?

Read: Radosh 298-308; Harding 270-276

Fri Dec 7: **Final Exam at Noon**

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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.

Help for writing papers

There are good resources from your very own Department of Religious Studies at the College of Charleston, on how to write a religious studies paper:

<http://religiousstudies.cofc.edu/undergrad-progs/resources.php>

The Center for Student Learning has writing labs and can arrange individual tutoring for these particular assignments at <http://www.cofc.edu/~csl/> or 953-5635.