

Evangelicals in America: Sex, Violence, Science, and Also Being Nice

Fiat Lux Seminar
Wednesday, 2-2:50 pm
DODD 154

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 2-3 pm (and by appointment)
Set up an office hours appointment here: <https://slotted.co/3qclm7s8>

Overview of the Course:

This course talks about a group that is much discussed but little understood: American Evangelicals. Who are they? What do they want? How do they relate to other groups? How does Evangelical identity intersect with politics, race, gender, and sexuality? How does studying Evangelicals help us understand the United States itself? We'll look at all of these questions, examining some works of sociology, history, and anthropology to think about what it means to be an Evangelical in the United States today. By the end of the quarter, students should have a good introduction to many ongoing conversations about Evangelicals in the United States.

Grading:

Your grade will be based on participation, attendance, and three brief reflections (minimum one double-spaced page) really just to give me a sense of how you're relating to the texts and the discussion. This is a straightforward course. Do the readings and you'll be fine.

Attendance and Participation:

You should come to class able to say something that shows you've done the reading. I have a fine ear for generic comments so please bring the texts to class and refer explicitly to particular arguments in our conversation. I will take attendance each day, and more than three absences will be counted as a failure for the course. If for some reason you must be absent four or more times, please contact me to discuss it.

Difficult Subjects

There is nothing particularly graphic or descriptively intense in the readings for this class, though it is still possible you may find some of the topics we discuss difficult or painful. I will try to be mindful as I describe the readings beforehand, and if you believe you are not able to do some of the readings for any reason, psychological or otherwise, please let me know.

Contacting Me

I'm at the e-mail above. Please e-mail all reflections directly to that e-mail address, and ask me any questions there as well.

Syllabus

(note: listed readings must be completed *by and for* the day under which they're listed.)

Week 1, April 5: What We're Doing, How We'll Do it, Why It Matters

Overview of the Course, Discussion of Course Themes, show part of the documentary, *Jesus Camp*.

Week 2, April 12: The Second Great Awakening (1)

The Democratization of American Christianity, pp. 1-48

Week 3, April 19: The Second Great Awakening (2)

The Democratization of American Christianity, pp. 162-209

First Reflection Due midnight, Monday April 24

Week 4, April 26: Evangelicals and Gender

Sally Gallagher, "Symbolic Traditionalism and Pragmatic Egalitarianism"

Week 5, May 3: Evangelicals and Dating

Courtney Irby, "Dating in the Light of Christ: Young Evangelicals Negotiating Gender in the Context of Religious and Secular American Culture"

Week 6, May 10: Evangelicals and Race

Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America pp. 51-68; 153-172

Week 7, May 17: Evangelicals and Sexuality

Lydia Bean, Brandon Martinez, "Evangelical Ambivalence toward Gays and Lesbians"

Second Reflection Due midnight, Monday May 22

Week 8, May 24: Evangelicals and Nationalism

Philip Gorski, "Why Evangelicals Voted for Trump: A Critical Cultural Sociology"

Week 9, May 31: Evangelicals and Intellectual Life

Molly Worthen, *Apostles of Reason*, pp. 1-55

Week 10, June 7: Evangelicals and Science

Jeffrey Guhin, "Why Worry about Evolution?"

Third Reflection Due midnight, Monday June 12