

**University of Calgary
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Religious Studies
Winter 2006**

06/01/04

RELS 489 L01 “Advanced Studies in Modern Christianity”

Lecture: T 14:00-16:45

Instructor: D. Shantz

Office / Hours: SS 1326 / 11:00-12:00am TR or by appt.

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Course Description:

The course examines selected Christian movements and thinkers that have risen to prominence during and since World War II. Topics include Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Liberation and Feminist Theologies, post-Vatican II Roman Catholicism, American Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, and Pentecostalism. The class will have both lecture and seminar components, including class discussion of assigned reading.

Course Objectives:

- a) The student will understand the origins, character and significance of prominent thinkers and movements within contemporary Christianity.
- b) The student will develop her/his ability to carefully read and cogently summarize written material, as well as develop skills in written and oral communication.
- c) The student will develop her/his critical judgment through evaluating contemporary Christian movements and thinkers from a critical historical perspective.

Course Texts:

Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson. *20th Century Theology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997.

Karl Barth. *God Here and Now*. London: Routledge, 2003.

Timothy G. McCarthy. *The Catholic Tradition: The Church in the Twentieth Century*. Rev. ed. Chicago: Loyola Press, 1998.

Randall Balmer. *Mine Eyes have Seen the Glory: A Journey into the Evangelical Subculture in America*, 3rd edition. New York: Oxford, 2000.

Grant Wacker. *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard, 2001.

Course Pack Readings, compiled by D. Shantz. 2006. Available in the Copy Centre

Course Requirements:

a) Class **Preparation and Participation** are essential. Every class includes discussion of assigned reading in the class texts and course pack. (30%)

b) **In two Tuesday classes** the student must prepare **an Interpretive Summary** based on the *assigned text and course pack reading* and lead the class in discussing the readings. Discussion should highlight key themes, offer critique, and raise unresolved questions. Length of each summary: about **750 words**. (20%)

c) Students must write a **1,500 word Book Review** (about 6 pages) of *either* the Barth text, or the Balmer text, or the Wacker text, according to the Book Review Format in this syllabus. (20%)

Barth review due: Jan. 17; Balmer review: Mar. 21; Wacker review: April 4

d) Each student must write a **Research Essay of 2,500 words** (about 10 pages). The essay topic should be chosen from those suggested in the syllabus. (30%)

The essay should offer a strong thesis on the topic and argue it clearly and persuasively using both primary and secondary sources (the latter including both journal articles and books). All sources must be documented according to an accepted style sheet (Turabian, Chicago, MLA). Due date: April 11.

Late assignments or essays will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made or a valid medical certificate is submitted. The same applies to in-class presentations. Any incomplete assignment or essay will be awarded a mark of F for that component of the course.

Grading

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme:

A+	100 - 96	A	95 - 90	A-	89 - 85
B+	84 - 80	B	79 - 75	B-	74 - 70
C+	69 - 65	C	64 - 60	C-	59 - 55
D+	54 - 53	D	52-50	F	Under 50

N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism is not tolerated at the University of Calgary and has serious consequences. Your essays/presentations must be your own work and inadequate referencing may be seen as plagiarism. Please see the relevant sections on Academic Misconduct in the current University Calendar. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation:

If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Once registered, please discuss any upcoming tests/examinations with the instructor **two weeks** before the scheduled date.

Withdrawing from courses:

Please note the information regarding withdrawals and fee refunds in the Academic Schedule of the current University Calendar.

Recording of lectures:

Recording any part of any lectures in any form must be first approved by the instructor in writing and is for individual private study only. See current Calendar, Tape recording of Lectures.

Gnosis:

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: gnosis@ucalgary.ca or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

Course Outline:

Week

Reading, Class Content and Presentation Topics

- 1 (Jan. 10) Reading: Grenz and Olson, pp. 9-23, 51-62; McCarthy, pp. 23-40.

Forces shaping Modernity: Modern Science, Enlightenment, Liberalism; Modernity and Religion
- 2 (Jan. 17) Grenz and Olson, pp. 63-77;
Karl Barth, *God Here and Now*, chap. 1-5

Responses to Modernity: Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- 3 (Jan. 24) Grenz and Olson, pp. 146-156
Video, Jan. 24: "Bonhoeffer" by Eberhard Bethge (2004)

Responses to Modernity: Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- 4 (Jan. 31) Grenz and Olson, pp. 200-224

The context, beginnings and concerns of Liberation Theology; Gustavo Gutierrez
- 5 (Feb. 7) Grenz and Olson, pp. 224-236

Beginnings and development of feminist theology; Rosemary Ruether; Mary Daly
- 6 (Feb. 14) T.G. McCarthy, pp. 12-16, 54-74
Video, Feb. 14: "Changing Christianity: From Schism to Ecumenism" (2004)

Pope John XXIII; the decisions and impact of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65)
- 7 (Feb. 28) Grenz and Olson, pp. 237f; 254-270;
McCarthy, pp. 1-3, 101-138, 407-411, 444-451

Recent theological changes and challenges within Catholicism; the issue of Authority in the Church; Responses of Hans Küng and John Paul II
- 8 (Mar. 7) McCarthy, chap. 11, "The Church and Mary"

Catholic-Protestant dialogues; Catholics and Evangelicals; Recent Catholic veneration of Mary.
- 9 (Mar. 14) Randall Balmer, chap. 1-7
Video, Mar. 14: "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory" by Randall Balmer (1990)

Fundamentalism and the Bible School Movement; Popular Evangelicalism

- 10 (Mar. 21) Grenz and Olson, pp. 286-288, 297-309; Balmer, chap. 8-16
Evangelicalism in the market place of ideas; Neo-evangelicalism and Fuller Theological Seminary
- 11 (Mar. 28) Grant Wacker, chap. 1-8
Pentecostal beginnings; the Pentecostal “mood”; why it survived
- 12 (Apr. 4) Grant Wacker, chap. 9-15 & Epilogue
Video, Apr. 4: “The Apostle” by Robert Duvall (1998)
The Growth of Pentecostalism and Charismatic renewal in America; the future of Pentecostalism.
- 13 (Apr. 11) Grenz and Olson, pp. 271-285
Post-modernism; Narrative Theology and use of Autobiography; Wrap-up

Book Review Format
By Douglas H. Shantz, Ph.D.

Your Goal: to provide a brief summary and careful evaluation of the book that assesses its usefulness to you and other students.

- a) Provide basic bibliographical data, including author, title, publisher, date, # of pgs.
- b) Identify the author and his/her credentials for writing the book.
- c) Identify the book's subject and genre and the author's purpose & audience.
- d) Explain the organization of the book. What issues and problems does the author raise (chapter titles help with this)?
- e) Briefly explain the main argument or recurring theme of the book. Identify supporting arguments (look for a summing-up at the end of each chapter), and key terms and concepts in the author's argument.
- f) Evaluate the clarity and organization of the book; illustrate your evaluation with examples.
- g) Evaluate whether the book has provided insight into the subject, achieved its stated purpose, and made a significant contribution to knowledge in the field.
Ask: Does the author satisfy your curiosity about the subject with the questions she raises and the answers she gives to them?
Has the author done good research and drawn valid conclusions from her research?
Has the author used primary resources or relied too much upon other author's interpretations?
Has the author interacted with the best secondary literature in the field?
Is the author consistent and logical? Do biases creep in and influence conclusions?

Be sure to illustrate your critical comments with specific examples from the book!
- h) Do you recommend this book? Why or why not

Further Reading on Writing Book Reviews:

Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren, *How to Read a Book, Revised and Updated* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972), pp. 163f.

Richard Marius, *A Short Guide to Writing about History, 2nd ed.* (New York HarperCollins, 1995), pp. 188-190.

Suggested Essay Topics for RELS 489

1. Barth's prophetic response to Naziism (eg. The Barmen Declaration)
2. "Bonhoeffer's struggle with modernity has constituted his continued legacy for theology." Discuss.
3. How Harvey Cox has changed his mind on secularization and survival of organized religion in the west.
4. Describe and evaluate the life and thought of a prominent liberation theologian (Gustavo Gutierrez, Hugo Assmann, Leonardo Boff, Jose Miranda, Juan Luis Segundo, Jon Sobrino)
5. Describe and evaluate the life and thought of a prominent feminist theologian (Rosemary Ruether, Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, Letty Russell, Anne Carr, Virginia Mollenkott, Pamela Dickey-Young).
6. Discuss the life journey and thought of the German theologian Dorothee Soelle.
7. Describe the differing Catholic interpretations of the significance of Vatican II.
8. Vatican II's understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church.
9. Explain and evaluate two contrasting visions of Catholicism as represented by Hans Küng and Pope John Paul II.
10. Describe and evaluate Hans Küng's views on papal infallibility. (*Infallible? An Inquiry*, 1971) or world religions (*Christianity and the World Religions*, 1985).
11. The Social Thought of John Paul II: Progressive or Reactionary?
12. Discuss the literary works (novels) of Father Andrew Greeley and their view of contemporary Catholic piety.
13. Discuss the thought and influence of Pope Benedict XVI.
14. Describe the growth and development of Protestant-Catholic dialogue.
15. Describe the pilgrimage towards Catholicism of one of the "new Catholics" such as R.J. Neuhaus or Scott Hahn.
16. Describe the rise and significance of Canadian and U.S. Bible Schools.
17. Explain and critique the main arguments of Mark Noll's *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (1994).
18. Discuss the writings and spirituality of either Joyce Huggett (*Listening to God* and other books) or Kathleen Norris (*Cloister Walk* and others).
19. Discuss the thought and significance of a leading Canadian theologian such as Clark Pinnock, Douglas John Hall, William Klassen, Arnold Snyder or James A. Reimer.
20. Discuss recent evangelical thought on the "openness of God" and the evangelical conversation with Process Theology. (eg. Clark Pinnock and John Cobb).
21. Discuss reasons for the growth of Pentecostalism.
22. Discuss Cox's views on the future of world religions as either fundamentalist or experiential (Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 264)
23. Present a detailed, critical discussion of the worldview of a postliberal Christian thinker.
24. Discuss the experience, writings and significance of Karen Armstrong (include references to *The Spiral Staircase*, *Through the Narrow Gate*, and *Battle for God*).
25. Examine and critique the thought of a late 20th C. Catholic or Protestant thinker who addresses issues raised by the new dialogue between Christianity and the non-Christian religions. (Paul Knitter, Karl Rahner, Clark Pinnock, Wilfred Cantwell Smith).