

Apocalypse Now? Jewish and Christian Movement and the End of Time

Spring 2018
Rutgers University
Tue and Thu – 7:15-8:35pm
Hick-211

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*** Course Description:**

From the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation to prophecy-like warnings from today's supposed pundits, many texts and leaders threaten a time of global catastrophe and divine judgment. Through appreciation of the religious motivations behind these perspectives, we will seek to understand these claims as products of diverse social-settings and cultural environments. Focusing especially on Jewish and Christian literature, this course aims to understand how ancient and modern apocalyptic traditions reflect the values, aspirations, and anxieties of their writers, editors, and earliest audiences. The first part of the course sets Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature within relevant social, political, and mythic contexts, considers the evidence for apocalyptic or millenarian movements associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls and the origins of Christianity, and explores relevant historical and social-scientific methods of study. In the second part of the course, we will shift to consider how 19th and 20th century traditions appropriate and re-imagine the thought and imagery of the biblical texts, especially in recent millenarian cults and the Left Behind series of Christian thrillers.

*** Course Outcomes:**

Through reading, listening, discussing, reflecting, and writing, students – after successfully completing this course with a final course grade of B or above – will be able to:

- Identify various apocalyptic discourses from various perspectives
- Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to the study of religion and apocalyptic movements and literature in particular.
- Evaluate and critically assess sources for apocalyptic movements and literature, and use appropriate conventions of attribution and citation.
- analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights on apocalypse.

*** Reading Materials:**

- Kelly J. Murphy and Justin Jeffcoat Schedtler, eds., *Apocalypses in Context: Apocalyptic Currents Throughout History* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2016).
= ISBN: 978-1451496239

- Bible: Harold W. Attridge, ed., *Harper Collins Study Bible - Student Edition: Fully revised and Updated* (HarperOne, New York, 2006).

= ISBN: 978-0060786847

*** Assessments and Grading Policy:**

Student learning will be assessed and graded according to the following distribution and rubric.

- Seven (7) Attendance-Based Weekly Preparatory Questions: 40%

= From Week Two (2) to Week Eight (8), participants are required to answer assigned chapter's "Getting Prepped" and "Study Questions." For those weeks with two chapters, please choose one chapter only.

= To get an "A" for the assessment, your responses should add your reflections on those questions. Also, it has to be submitted on the day of its discussion.

= Grading rubric:

-> Thoroughly answered the questions plus personal reflection: 60%

-> Grammar, syntax, and spell-checking: 20%

-> Timely submission: 20%

- Group Presentation: 20%

= Each group will choose a chapter from #14 to #21 of Murphy and Schedtler. Each group will present for roughly 30-50 minutes, and engage questions at the end of the presentation.

= Grading rubric:

-> Thesis and arguments of the chapter are clearly presented: 40%

-> Creative and engaging presentation: 40%

-> Fully utilized the class period: 20%

- One (1) Research Paper: 40%

= Write a five-page paper research paper with clear thesis and arguments. Please use resources beyond our class materials (they should be academic books, peer-reviewed journals, and other legitimate sources). The paper is double-spaced, Times New Roman, font size 12, 1 inch margins, and no need for cover page.

= Grading Rubric:

-> Clear articulation of thesis: 40%

-> Well-structured and compelling arguments that support the thesis: 40%

-> Grammar, syntax, and spell-checking: 20%

*** IMPORTANT GRADING POLICIES AND INFORMATION:**

- Work should be submitted on time. Preparatory questions and the final paper should be submitted on the date assigned by the instructor. If, however, you find that you will be unable to

meet the deadline, then contact the instructor well in advance of the due date in order to make arrangements for a later date. You will need a valid excuse to submit work late. Valid excuses could be medical emergency, family crisis, or Rutgers's institutional demand.

- Please present your own best work in this course. Plagiarized work will not be accepted, and will be punished harshly, according to University guidelines.

- Please notify the instructor promptly of any documented disability that may affect your ability to succeed in this course so that appropriate accommodation can be made.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<p>week 1: Jan 16 & 18</p>	<p>- <u>Preliminary Remarks</u> - <u>Introduction: From Before the Bible to Beyond the Bible</u> # Read: Schedtler and Murphy, p.3-18</p>
<p>week 2: Jan 23 & 25</p>	<p>- <u>The First Apocalypse</u> # Read: Hays, p.19-36 - <u>"Proto-Apocalyptic"</u> # Read: Hays, p.37-60 # Choose one chapter #Preparatory Questions (PQ)1</p>
<p>week 3: Jan 30 & Feb 1</p>	<p>- <u>Apocalyptic Literature Beyond the Biblical Canons</u> # Read: Wyse-Rhodes, p.61-86 #PQ2</p>
<p>week 4: Feb 6 & 8</p>	<p>- <u>Apocalyptic Movements in Early Judaism</u> # Read: Williamson Jr. and Schedtler, p87-112 #PQ3</p>
<p>week 5: Feb 13 & 15</p>	<p>- <u>Apocalyptic Currents in Early Christianity</u> # Read: Carey, 113-128 #PQ4</p>

<p>week 6: Feb 20 & 22</p>	<p>- <u>Paul: The Apocalyptic Apostle</u> # Read: Jipp, p.129-142</p> <p>#PQ5</p>
<p>week 7: Feb 27 & Mar 1</p>	<p>- <u>The Beast or the Lamb</u> # Read: Schedtler, p.143-164</p> <p>#PQ6</p>
<p>week 8: Mar 6 & 8</p>	<p>- <u>The Transformation of the Apocalyptic Heritage</u> # Read: Shuve, p.165-186</p> <p>- <u>The Decline of Second Temple Jewish Apocalypticism</u> # Read: Sheinfeld, p.187-210</p> <p># Choose one chapter #PQ7</p>
<p>Spring Recess: Mar 13 & 15</p>	
<p>week 9: Mar 20 & 22</p>	<p>- <u>The End of the World... Again?</u> # Read: Ables, p.211-230</p> <p>- <u>Apocalypse in Islam</u> # Read: Mohamed, p.231-252</p>
<p>week 10: Mar 27 & 29</p>	<p>- <u>What Kind of World is Possible?</u> # Read: Breed, p.253-288</p> <p>- <u>Group Presentation (x1)</u></p>
<p>week 11: Apr 3 & 5</p>	<p><u>No Classes</u> Instructor in the Philippines</p>
<p>week 12: Apr 10 &</p>	<p>- <u>Group Presentation (x2)</u></p>

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week 13: Apr 17 & 19	- <u>Group Presentation (x2)</u>
week 14: Apr 24 & 26	- <u>Group Presentation (x1)</u> - <u>Concluding Remarks</u>
SP exam week: May 3-9	<u># Paper due on this week</u>